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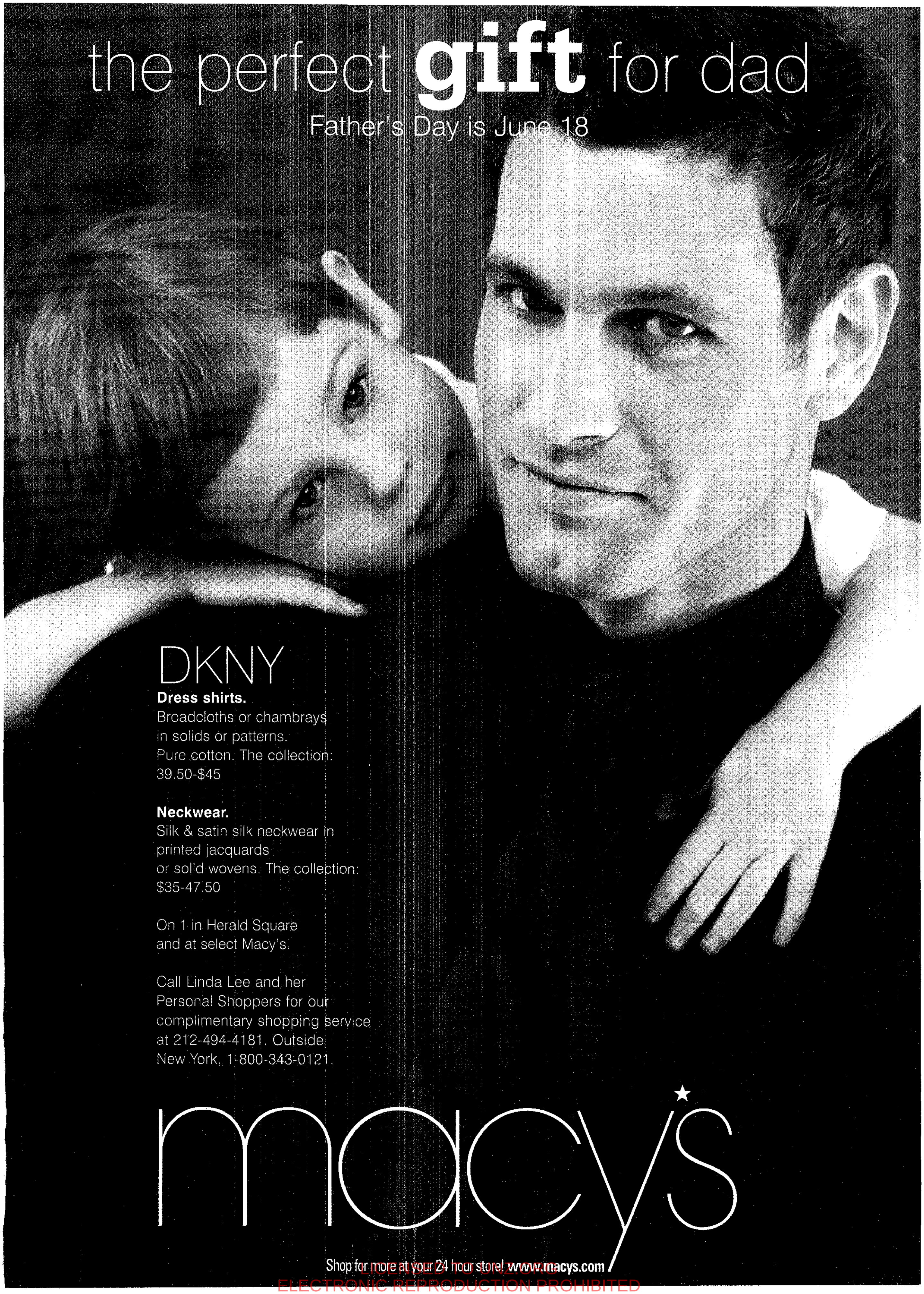

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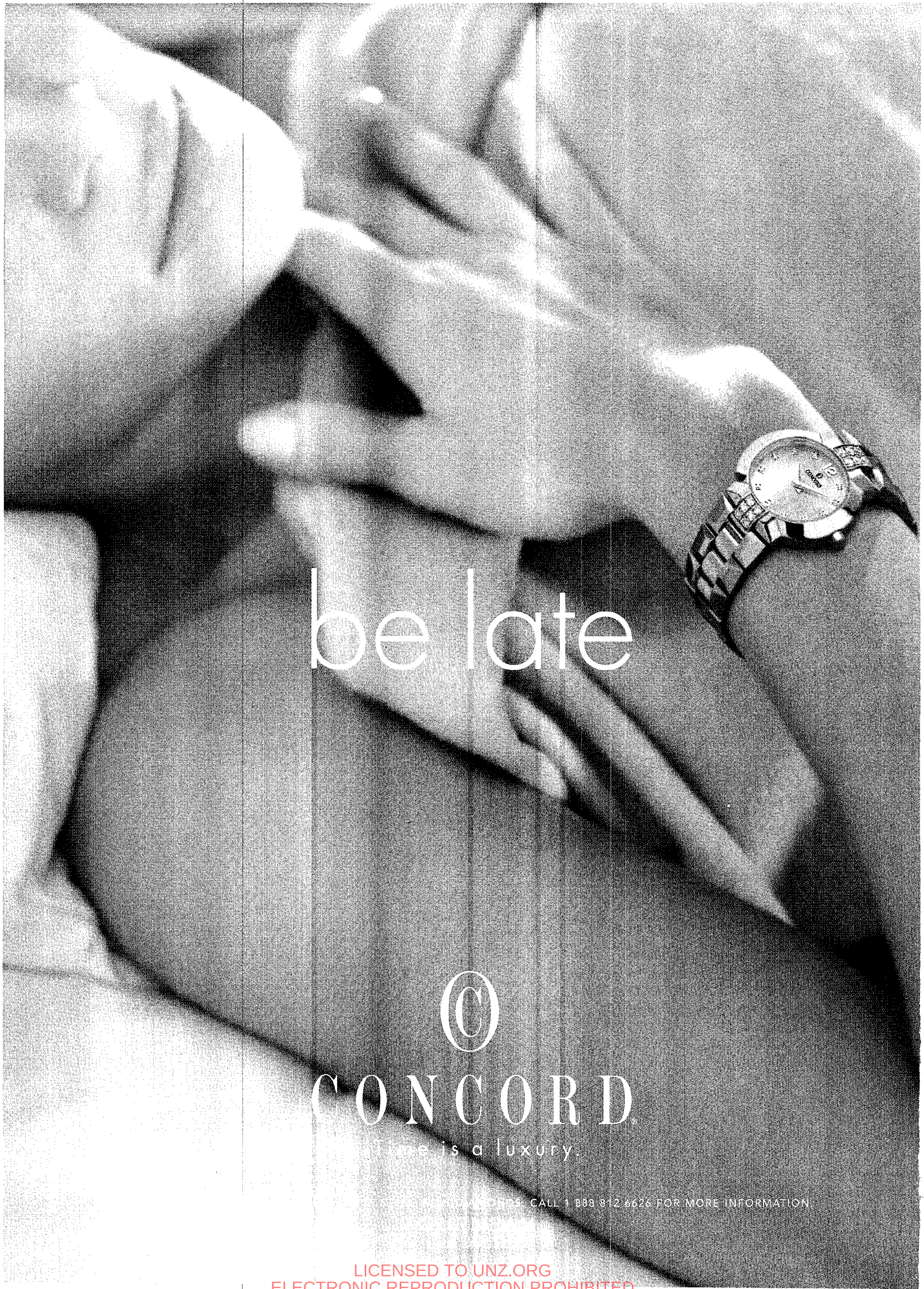
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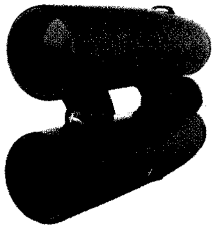

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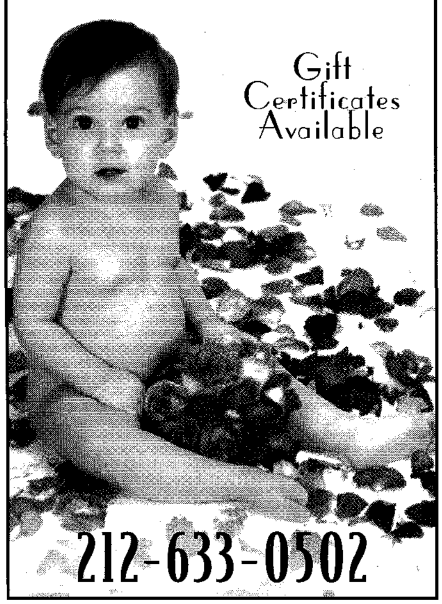

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LETTERS JUNE 12, 2000

Hell's Kitchen

Chefs shouldn't complain—there are worse restaurant jobs; a builder defends his fellow contractors; why professional traders can't afford to get cocky.

OF COURSE THE FOOD WORLD hates Anthony Bourdain's guts ["Gotham: The Beast of Bourdain," by Ethan Smith, May 22]; in his book, *Kitchen Confidential,* he reveals what those of us who have left the business know: The restaurant business sucks. At least chefs have some creative input and control, as well as respect. Managers, on the other hand, are drones who work ridiculous hours in offices that are usually in the basement, often filthy and vermin-infested; they get abused by both the customers and their foul-mouthed, ill-mannered employers; they are rarely praised and always underpaid. I myself have had the misfortune of working for some of the biggest creeps in the business. But now I am happily employed in banking, where I have the respect of my clients, my co-workers, and my bosses, and for the first time in more than twenty years actually have a life: no nights, no weekends, no holidays. I love going to work. So to all those still toiling 60 to 80 hours a week with no pension, no 401(k), and no joy, I say: Get out now. There *is* life outside the hellish world of the restaurant business.

Pamela Mason
LAWRENCEVILLE, N.J.

Church Workers

I REALLY ENJOYED MARK JACOBSON'S ARTICLE "The Laptop Nomads" ["Cityside," May 15]. Especially the part about working in churches. I am a student of the organist at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, and I understand why Mr. Jacobson chooses to work there—especially when Terry Flanagan is practicing. At a very young age, he's become one of the best in the business. Anyone interested in hearing really wonderful organ music is welcome to come hear him any Sunday morning.

Maxine Gaddis
MANHATTAN

I CURRENTLY WORK IN AN OPEN-SPACE ENvironment where I do not even have the dignity of a "soul-killing cubicle," where I am burdened with two continuously ringing phones, voice mail, a speedy network with Internet access, instantaneous e-mail, and access to all the regular office amenities such as fax machines, copiers, printers, and, of course, my co-workers. Despite his woe at being an "officeless vagabond," I found Mark Jacobson's tale of his nomadic life appealing and inspiring.

Kimberly B. Essency
MANHATTAN

Contractor Killers

IT MUST BE OPEN SEASON ON CONTRACtors ["Gotham: Nailbiter," by Carl Swanson, May 22]. It seems that whether you're reading *Dan's Papers, The Southampton Press, The Observer,* or even the delightful *New York,* someone is disparaging the building industry. Why is it that you rarely see a positive article about contractors? Yes, I acknowledge that there are some disreputable contractors, but why is the bad client never addressed? The undecided client. The forever-changing-his-mind client. The cutting-corners client. The dishonest client. The superior-attitude client. And the just-downright-abusive client. I don't know why the contractor in your article ran out of cherrywood for his floor. But being a general contractor, I know that it takes two to toenail a bad experience.

Charles Guarino
MANHATTAN

Trade Winds

I HAVE BEEN IN THE HEDGE-FUND BUSIness for twelve years and enjoy Jim Cramer's media personality from time to time. But after reading his recent "Bottom Line" column ["Soros Losers," May 15], I wondered whether he had recently taken a nasty fall and hit his head. He of all people should be wary of hubris and be careful not to demean his peers publicly. Perhaps his memory has failed him. He wrote that article having forgotten that trading for a living means failing more than succeeding. I remind him of Richard Dennis. Michael Steinhardt. Even John Meriweather. He should once again cringe at Sherman McCoy's pride. If it wasn't for George Soros, the hedge-fund business wouldn't exist. If it wasn't for the demise of Long-Term Capital Management, the hedge-fund business wouldn't have a future. The "comeuppance" Cramer mentions is one he should be warning people about. Ninety percent of traders lose all of their money. Cramer forgets that we (as risk-takers) are only as good as our last trades, and we should all know that our own time to fail miserably is waiting for us somewhere out there. I hope he hasn't forgotten. His business is in danger if he has.

David Johnstone
MIAMI, FLA.

Dinosaur Bone

THANK GOODNESS PETER RAINER IS NOT riding the wave of enthusiasm for Disney's *Dinosaur* ["Movies: Money Tawks," May 29], yet another movie of computer-enhanced animation. We need more serious film critics like Mr. Rainer who can see through so much of today's fake multiplex fluff and still believe that movies should be about, you know, people.

Paul Grimaldi
YONKERS, N.Y.

String Theory

ALTHOUGH NOT SURPRISED, I AM ANGERED to see that not one of your "shoestring" items is what I would consider affordable ["Hip Codes," by Mark Holgate, May 15]. If you think that a $470 trench coat, a $190 top, a $70 tank top, or $155 sandals are not bank-account trashers, you cater more to the elite than I had imagined. These are not bargains to ordinary people just trying to keep afloat in this city.

Kate Anthony
MANHATTAN

Correction In the "Gotham" article "Carl Friedan Strikes Back" (May 29), the URL for Friedan's Website was misspelled. It is www.carlfriedan.com.

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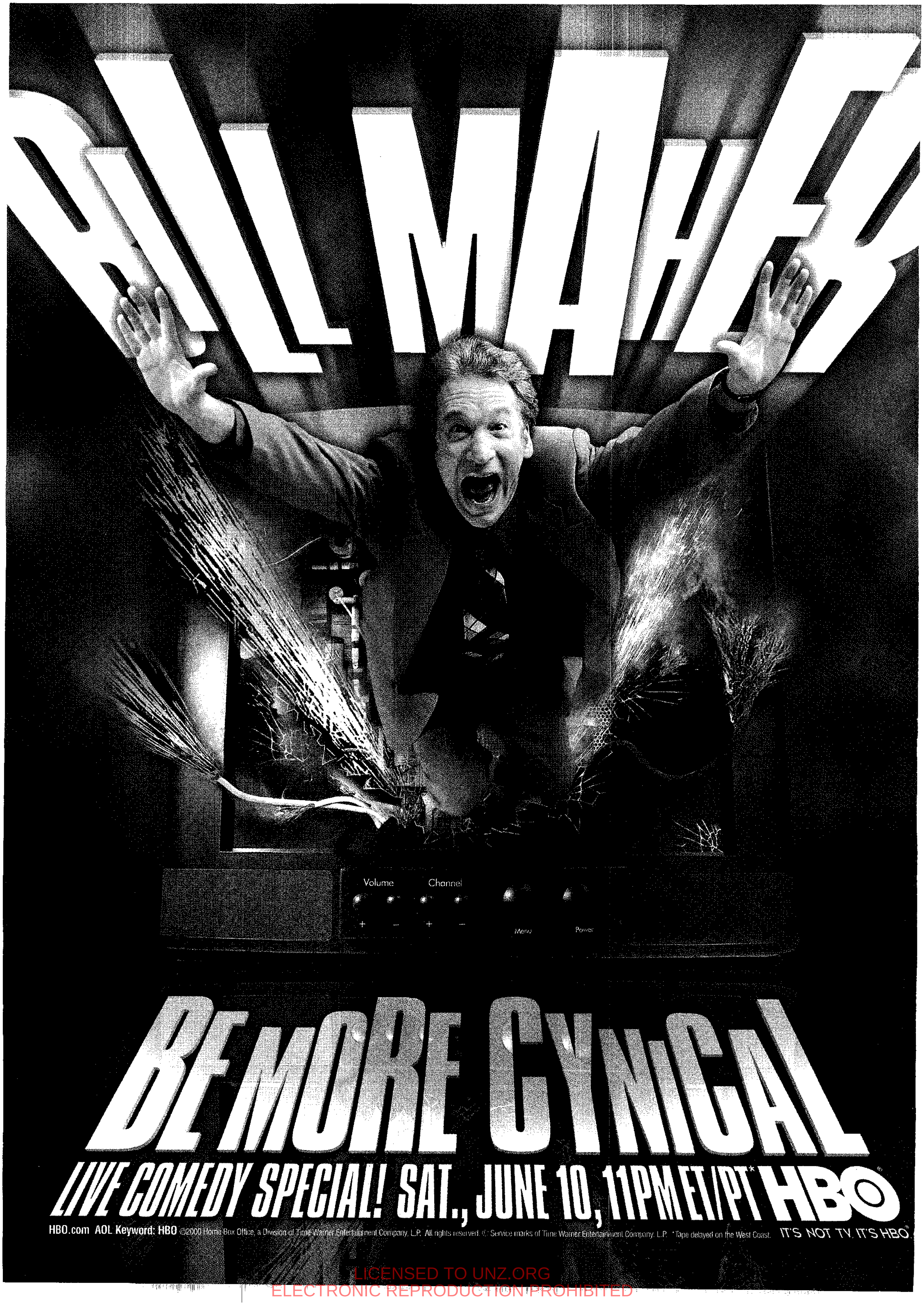
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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND IAN SPIEGELMAN

INTELLIGENCER

George Clooney: The perfect sleep?

THREE KINGS OF THE HOTEL BUSINESS

A burgeoning partnership is about to give new meaning to the term *hip hotelier.* According to West Coast entertainment insiders, **George Clooney**, **Cindy Crawford**, and **Rande Gerber** have been searching for a space in which to open a Los Angeles hotel. "I can't comment on anything at this point," says Gerber. "George is in the acting business, I'm in the bar business. I think it's just a rumor." Not so, says one source, who reports that the trio has already bid on one Sunset Strip property, just a towel's toss from **Ian Schrager**'s Mondrian, where Gerber has the Skybar. Schrager, who is currently suing Gerber for opening bars in competing hotels, maintains he is unfazed by the prospect. Says Schrager: "I have no problem with what he does; I only have a problem when he violates a contract."

PATSY'S NIXES SINATRA BASH

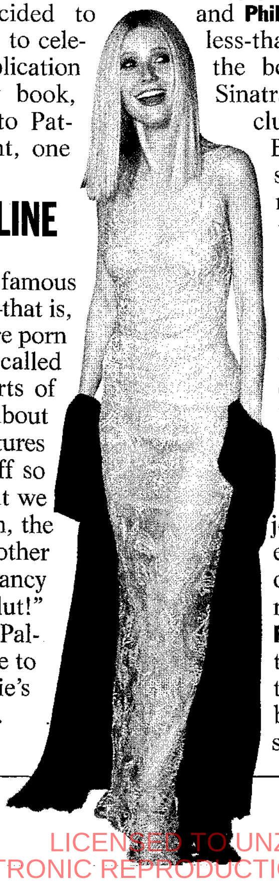
Is Patsy's saying no to Frank Sinatra after all these years? When the editors of *The Sinatra Files* decided to throw a party to celebrate the publication of their new book, they turned to Patsy's restaurant, one of the singer's famous haunts. Publishing insiders say Patsy's patriarch **Joe Scognamillo** and family considered sponsoring the event until they saw an advance copy of the work, edited by journalist brothers **Tom** and **Phil Kuntz**. Among other less-than-flattering details, the book compiles Frank Sinatra's FBI record and includes reports of Ol' Blue Eyes being described by government snoops as an ill-tempered carouser; it also reveals that Sinatra told draft-board doctors that he was "neurotic" and abnormally afraid of crowds. Sources say the Patsy's clan maintains a close relationship with Sinatra's children, and rejected hosting the event so they wouldn't offend the family. Joe's nephew, co-owner **Frank DiCola**, confirms they declined to participate but insists the book's editors were still welcome to throw a Patsy's bash—with their own cash. "Hey, I'll take anybody's money," DiCola insists. "But if we do any P.R., it's going to be for us." And that could be soon: DiCola says the family is shopping around its *own* proposal for a book that will include some of Patsy's famous recipes—and Sinatra stories of its own.

ENDEAVOR'S AGENT PROVOCATEUR

Producer-screenwriter **Jonathan Hensleigh** has found a new Endeavor—he's dumped his agency. Hollywood insiders say the *Armageddon* scribe was taken aback by comments his rep at the Endeavor agency, **David Lonner**, made in an article recently published in *Talk* magazine, where he is quoted as saying, "There's a side of agenting where you wind clients up and make them feel more insecure than they usually do." The loose-lipped Lonner goes on to describe these kinds of agent mind games as a "necessary evil." After the piece came out, Hensleigh bolted the firm, signing on with ICM. But Hensleigh insists he left for other reasons. "My departure from Endeavor is not linked to anything written in print media within the last five years, including the *Talk* magazine article," he insists.

GWYNETH SITE OFFERS DISCIPLINE

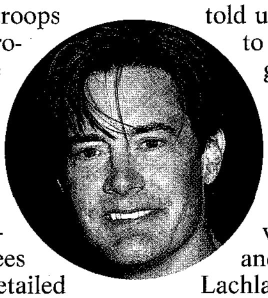
It's wonderful to be one of those people so famous that you're known by just your first name—that is, until someone starts using it to sell hard-core porn online. You might expect that a site called www.gwyneth.com would offer up all sorts of amusing anecdotes and little-known facts about Oscar winner **Gwyneth Paltrow**. Instead, it features flashing advertising banners for rough stuff so depraved we shouldn't even mention it. But we will. Under the guise of all things Gwyneth, the sneaky Websters direct surfers to, among other things, a Web page devoted to pregnancy fetishists, proudly proclaiming, "Mom is a slut!" An ad for another site that unsuspecting Paltrow lovers will discover announces, "I have to punish you now!" We're sure that Gwynie's fans would never be into *anything* like that.



DAVID REMNICK'S MILITARY SNAFU

New Yorker editor-in-chief **David Remnick** might want to take a cue from his magazine's famed fact-checking department. When Command Sergeant Major **James D. Randolph** (retired) got wind of a story that **Seymour M. Hersh** was writing about his infantry division's actions in the Gulf War, he fired off a letter to Remnick voicing concerns about the article's accuracy. Hersh's account, published last month, accuses the 24th Division of killing POWs, gunning down civilians, and slaughtering a fleeing Iraqi column after the cease-fire was declared. But in his letter, Randolph stresses that, as a noncommissioned officer, he would have known if his troops had acted inappropriately—and he insists that they did not. In a terse, three-sentence response faxed to Randolph, Remnick guarantees he's read the detailed letter "with due seriousness." Serious or no, he didn't quite manage to get the veteran's title right. Remnick addressed him as Major James D. Randolph—quite a boost in rank—and gave the old soldier an even bigger promotion on his fax cover letter, bestowing Randolph with the rank of major general. We were kind enough to point out these slipups to Remnick. "Noted," he replied.

BOYS ACT UP AT *SEX* PREMIERE



The male cast members of *Sex and the City* were letting their testosterone show at the HBO series's season-premiere party last week. As **Kyle MacLachlan** (pictured) and **Chris** "Mr. Big" **Noth** squeezed into the teeming crowd at Guastavino's, MacLachlan told us, "I'm just trying to keep up with this guy. He's been on the show for a while and he's showing me the ropes. For example, he knew to wear a suit tonight and I didn't." MacLachlan added that Noth has something else going for him: "He looks a little like **Tom Cruise**—an old, old, *old* Tom Cruise who's been over the coals for a while." After some earnest celebrating, Noth turned to MacLachlan, shouting, "Let's fight!" The two then commenced chanting in each other's faces, "Let's do it! Let's do it!" A giddy Noth exclaimed, "It'll be just like *Fight Club*." Less frisky was the show's star, **Sarah Jessica Parker**. "I'm a bit overextended with producing and acting on this show and hosting the MTV [Movie] Awards," she told us. "I'm working about nineteen and a half hours a day." And in her free time? "I sleep," she said.

FOOD FOR NAUGHT IN TRIBECA NOT-SPOT

New Yorkers will do just about anything to get into a hot new restaurant, even a make-believe one. When set designers for the upcoming **Richard Gere** and **Winona Ryder** flick *Autumn in New York* put together a posh-looking, though fake, eatery in a warehouse on the corner of Washington and Watts Streets, passersby took the bait. Designer **Mark Friedberg** tells us his creation of glass and mirrors had a "contemporary, sophisticated feel" that hip foodies just couldn't resist. "People kept stopping in to try and have a meal," says Friedberg. "We even had people insisting they had reservations!" Wonder if such eager crowds will show up at the theaters.

WEST IS GOODE; *VOICE* ISN'T FREE

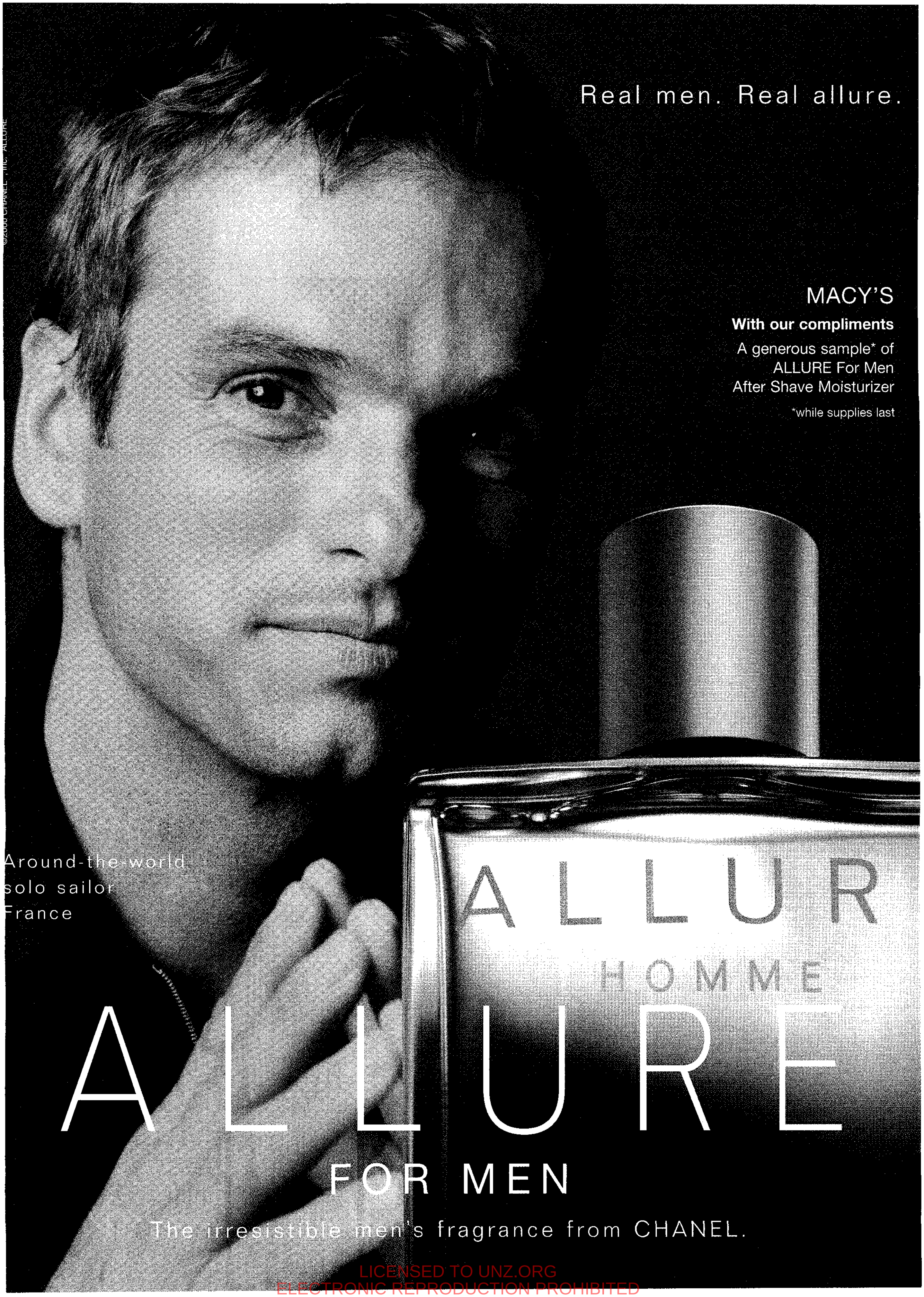
WEST SIDE STORY: Colonization continues in West Chelsea. **Eric Goode** has found a garage next to an open space on Tenth Avenue and 20th Street, which, according to real-estate sources, he plans to turn into a Bowery Bar–style restaurant. "I'm not in the club business," insists Goode, who first made his name in New York with Area in the eighties. "I want a place where I can go with my friends." Around the corner at 521 West 19th Street, Le Zoo and Waterloo owners **Stephane Dorlan**, **Alex Bueno de Moraes**, and **Aymen Bourjini** have grabbed up a new space. They plan to open a restaurant called High Altitude, which will specialize in mountain-area cuisine like fondues and raclettes. Thank goodness: We were wondering where to go for a good raclette.

VOICE FOR THE HOMELESS: Move over, *Street News*. Some enterprising homeless people have found a new way to make a buck in the subway—by selling *The Village Voice*. On a recent Thursday morning, panhandlers were spotted working the F line toting shopping bags loaded with copies of the free weekly. "I know it's not much, but I like to give something back for a donation," one homeless man announced. Aware of his desirable commodity, he heralded: "These are new issues—they just came out yesterday." The *Voice*'s managing editor, **Doug Simmons**, doesn't seem to mind: "Who's the victim there? As long as it ends up in the hands of a reader, I don't have any complaint," he says. Hey, it's *one* way to boost circulation.

BALDWIN: *DON'T* BLAME CANADA

Stephen Baldwin (right) has a new project, but the Screen Actors Guild would prefer he stick to playing Barney Rubble. The actor is in talks with investors about building a professional film studio in Canada, complete with sound stages, postproduction facilities, and recording studios. This should come as bad news to the Screen Actors Guild, which was already peeved with Baldwin after he announced how much he enjoyed working in our northern neighbor on a Los Angeles TV show. Baldwin says SAG reps warned him that his pro-Canada comments might encourage filming outside the States, and shift American acting jobs to Canadian hams. Baldwin remains unconvinced. "More than 30 percent of all films are made in Canada, and I'm willing to bet that of all the American films that go [there to shoot], 75 percent would not have been made unless they did," Baldwin argues, adding, "With the amount of SAG dues I've paid, why was this the first time I heard of runaway production?" SAG spokesperson **Meryl Weinsaft** says *she* sure doesn't know why the union's anti-Canada stance is news to Baldwin: "We've included reports on it in our local and national newsletters. It's one of the perks of membership." Maybe Baldwin reads the trades instead.

Additional reporting by Brooke Gosin and Suny Sehgal.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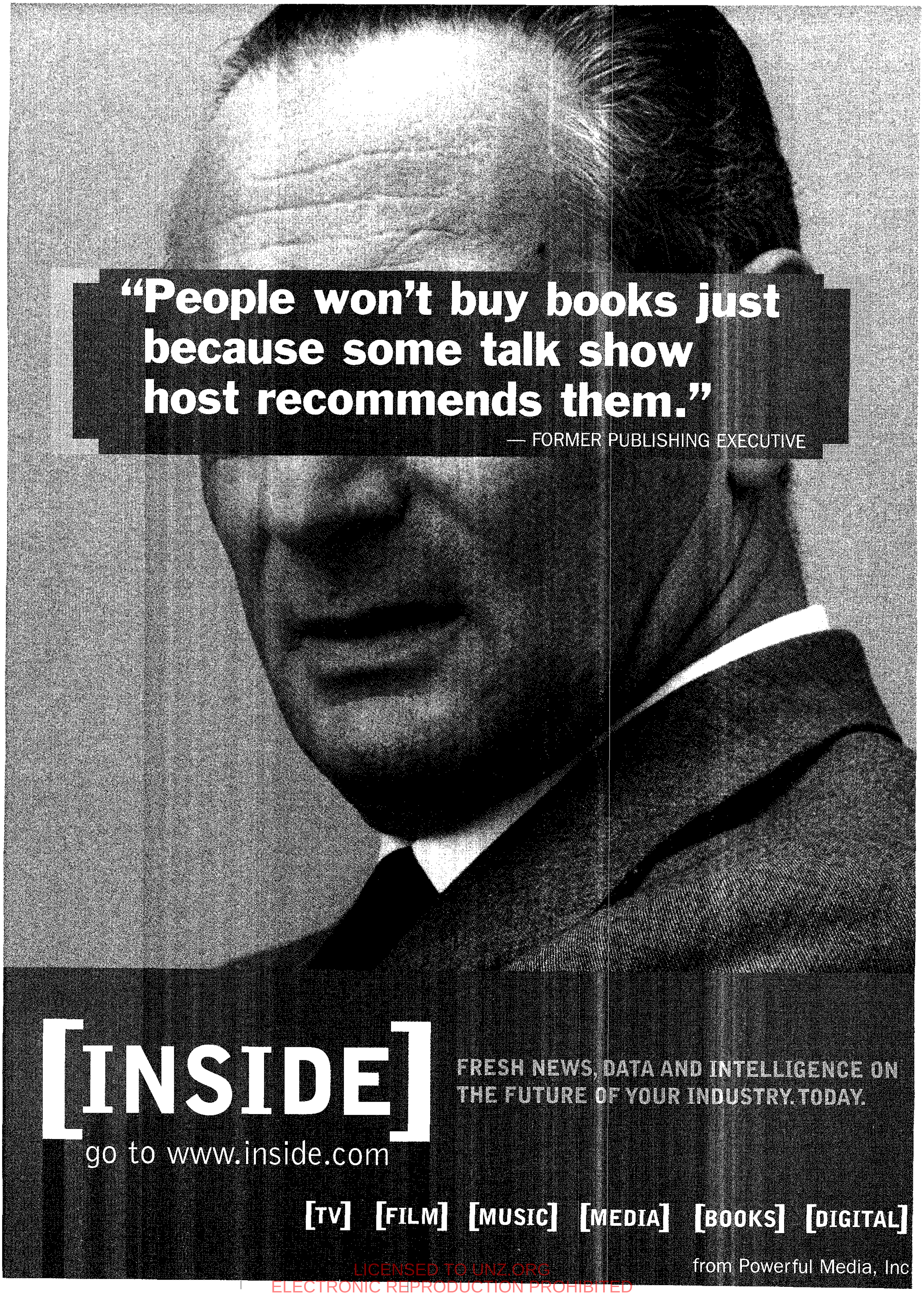

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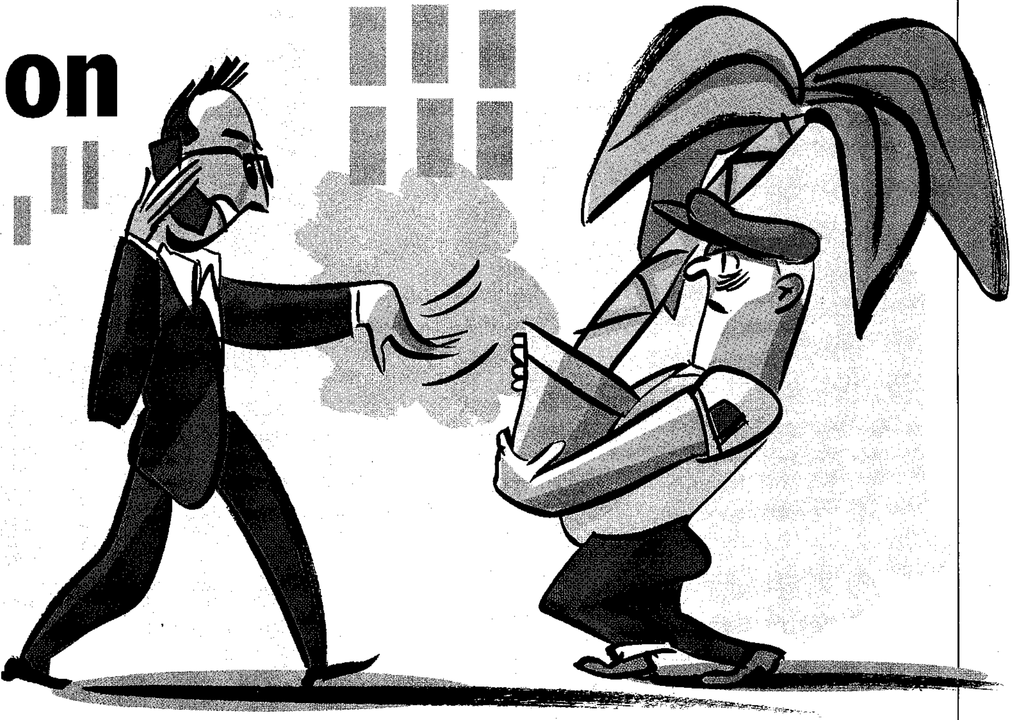
GOTHAM

Expansion Teams

Dot-com players are staking out new turf in the flower district, the garment district, and beyond.



WHEN DAVE KAHNG of iCollege.com began his search for the perfect loftlike aerie, his original target was, naturally, in the heart of Silicon Alley. “A year and a half ago, an architect we knew signed a lease for $18 a square foot. So we thought our upper limit of $28 was reasonable,” says Kahng. “But what we were seeing was so unacceptable we even went down to Wall Street. Which was great”—until his employees balked at the commute and the surrounding suit society. “It would have made them *slightly* unhappier.”

Just as Silicon Alley has reached critical mass as a legitimate New York district and Internet-company employees have been gloating about their light-filled open offices with trendy addresses within walking distance of Commune or Chelsea Piers, a bumper crop of start-ups are finding they can’t fit their Power Macs inside the Web ghetto and won’t be privy to such fashionable luxuries. “Right now, we’re racing to get any deal done anywhere,” says David Lebenstein, director of sales and leasing at Time Equities, who notes that even after the NASDAQ slump, he can’t find enough spaces for Internet clients, however uncool the location may be. “We’ll take *whatever* we can close.”

The commercial crunch means that the Alley is turning into more of a six-lane highway, roaring north and west into the garment and flower districts. “Owners realize their properties are more valuable for other purposes than running a wholesale flower business,” sighs Pete Sutton, who formed the Flower Market Association of New York City to try to preserve the character of the district. Landlords in the garment district are also getting wise: “The average rent in midtown is $55 a foot, $35 to $40 in the Park Avenue South area,” says Brett Zelner, senior managing director of the Lansco Corporation. Landlords are not renewing the leases of longtime tenants paying $12 to $18 a foot, in the hopes of enticing dot-coms

>

POLITICS Campaign-Trail Traffic Report

Hey, Rick, look ou—Ouch! We hate it when sidewalks attack people like that! Give him points for getting stitched up fast and making it to the next rally. But boy, did he look goofy. ●

Unveils “Mainstream Express.” Barnstorming upstate is a time-honored tactic, but fuzzy rhetoric left reporters wondering exactly what *mainstream* means. Call it the Small-Talk Express. ○

Lazio plays the Arafat card, and Wolfson calls it a “recycled attack.” This from the campaign that called Rick a Gingrich Republican? Can’t anybody here play this game? ●

Knock knock. Who’s there? Hillary. Hillary who? Exactly. The “issues, not insults” high road is fine, but it can get *soooooo* quiet sometimes. Call *it* the Small-Talk Express. ○

Illustration by Tom Bachtell. Photographs: left, Richard B. Levine; right, Richard Ellis/Corbis Sygma.

Expansion *continued from page 13*

with their industrial spaces. "These ex-factories had run-down floors, run-down bathrooms, no A/C," marvels Kahng. "They were asking for a year's security. You can't take it the way it is—but people *did.*"

Other landlords, like Max Capital Management, are shelling out as much as $30 million a building to remodel former sweatshops. About.com signed on for 170,000 square feet in its recently revamped 1440 Broadway for $50 a foot. DoubleClick leased 400,000 square feet at 450 West 33rd Street. At 248 West 35th, Heung Fook Fashion, the company that manufactured clothing for Kathie Lee Gifford (and leased for $7.25 a foot), moved out and Resume.com, Netcentives.com, and the New York Institute of Technology moved in for an average of $30 a foot. "The garment district is just another office market at this point," says Adam Hochfelder, Max Capital's president.

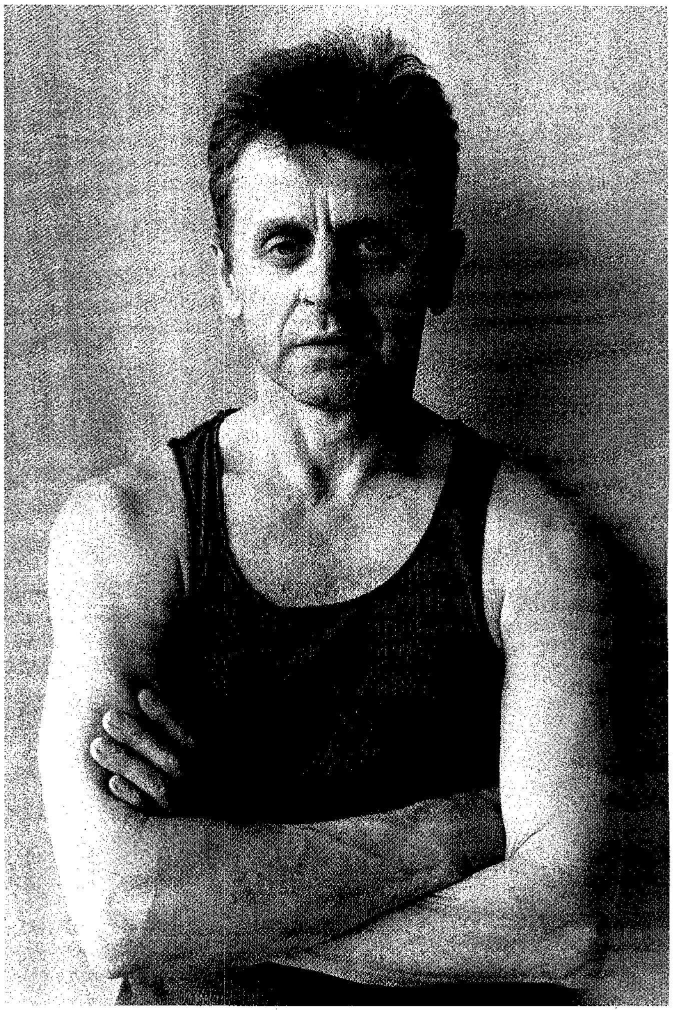
"It's important to get the right space," says Corcoran.com CFO Tan Chen. "The garment district is ethnic restaurants; Silicon Alley is hip and relaxed." The company finally found neutral ground at 41st and Madison. Restaurants, in fact, often make or break a deal: When Word.com finally settled on a former photography studio at 27th and Broadway, managing editor Michelle Golden reports, one colleague got pouty about there being nowhere to eat. "It's a weird kind of nether space," admits Golden. "We even started fantasizing about Harlem," says editor Marisa Bowe. But it's a good thing they didn't. "There *were* some spaces in Harlem," reports Time Equities' David Lebenstein. "But now they're gone."

SARAH BERNARD

DANCE

Foot Soldier

Ballet did more than ruin Baryshnikov's knees—it finally bored him.



MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV changes his practice clothes three times in an hour and a half. He starts with plush gray sweatpants rolled up to his calves and a blue T-shirt with the White Oak Dance Project logo running along the sleeve. His feet, bulging with veins, are bare and planted firmly on the sprung floor of Trisha Brown's rehearsal studio. A vertical line cleaving his brow grows deeper and his tongue presses against his upper lip in concentration as he moves methodically through the space. "It's *hard,*" he tells dancer Emily Coates, describing the way she needs to jump into his arms. Still not breaking a bead of sweat, he changes his shirt, puts on drawstring pajama pants, and massages his lower back as he waits for his entrance in the difficult passage. He suddenly blurts out, "This piece should be called *Mind Fuck*!" The five other dancers break out in laughter. By the time they run through the next dance, he's changed his shirt again.

Ten years ago, Mikhail Baryshnikov started his own modern-dance troupe. Now he is determined never to return to ballet. "There is nothing else in classical dance, no matter what kind of beautiful production they'll present to me," he insists. "It just doesn't do anything anymore." Now 52, a father of four and Nyack resident, Baryshnikov says his raison d'être still hasn't changed—"In order to put on a pair of pants in the morning, I have to whip my butt and do something that I'll remember three months from now"—even if his body, and his vision of the dance that drives him, have. On a typical day, he spends about two hours with his physiotherapist working on his ballet-ruined knees, an hour and a half in warm-up class, and six hours rehearsing with his dancers.

His focus and interest in modern dance, he insists, date to long before he formed White Oak; while still a dancer at the Kirov, he was drawn to the work of the postmodernists at the Village's Judson Memorial Church in the sixties, to "these women and men with this wild hair and bell-bottom pants and barefoot and that totally free line," he remembers, who were challenging all of dance's conventions. Still intrigued by the era, Baryshnikov's White Oak will present "PastForward" this fall, a project to preserve works from the Judson era as well as commission new works from its alumni. This week at BAM, White Oak will perform *Glacial Decoy,* by Judson alum Trisha Brown; the premieres of two new works, one by Mark Morris and John Jasperse; and Judson legend Yvonne Rainer's resonantly named *After Many a Summer, Dies the Swan.* ("When you see people at the peak of their powers," says Rainer, "you know you're watching something very fleeting.")

"Maybe I'll stop tomorrow," says Misha. "But as long as I have interesting work . . . I'll always somehow be involved . . . to see how it's done from scratch, from the idea. There's nothing better than that."

ROSE-ANNE CLERMONT

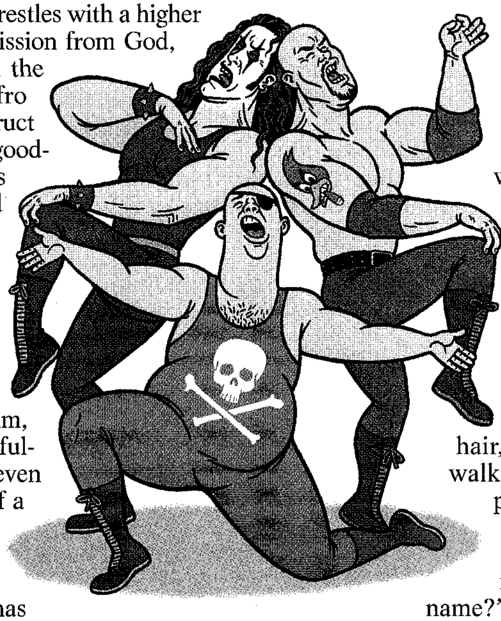
Photographed by Matthias Clamer.

THEATER Singin' in the Ring

Forget Jesse Ventura: New York's *first* wrestling musical, already in production, is about a Hasid on a mission from God.

JESSE VENTURA MAY HAVE BEEN THE FIRST pro wrestler elected to statewide office, but he's not going to be the first immortalized in a glitzy musical, Broadway producer Pierre Cossette's plans notwithstanding. That honor will go instead to the fictional Mickey Blitzman, a.k.a. the Blitzkrieg Kid, whose story opens next month at One51.

The hunky Hasid wrestles with a higher purpose: He's on a mission from God, who appears early in the story (sporting an Afro and sideburns) to instruct Mickey to "work the good-and-evil angle." Things don't go as planned once he learns that—*gasp!*—the fights are fixed. "Mickey is the ultimate straight man," says *Blitzkrieg* playwright-director Ron Glucksman, 38. "God has spoken to him, and he's dedicated to fulfilling his mission—even though God is kind of a hip-hop gangster."



The show's art director, Paris transplant Benoit Lafitte, has a distinctly Gallic take on this blend of divine inspiration and mass entertainment. "I was seduced by the show's deeper meaning," he says at the end of the first full-cast read-through. "It's Orson Welles crossed with Charlie Chaplin." The show unfolds as an overheated Borscht Belt burlesque—complete with a chorus of semi-clad "Strumpettes," a wisecracking promoter with a vaguely Yiddish accent, and a sexually ambiguous villain who dabbles in Rohypnol. "Just like wrestling, it's old-fashioned blood-and-thunder theater," says Glucksman. "Only with more music and dancing." (The latter is more than just WWF moves and line kicks—choreographer Rachel Murray is a member of Mark Morris's dance company.)

Blitzkrieg's actual wrestling connections are limited to an Antichrist figure named—what else?—Vince McMahon. But that may change. Last winter, Glucksman and some of his cast were in a SoHo deli, trading McMahon impersonations. "This *really* nicely dressed guy—slicked-back hair, expensive suit—was walking by the table," the playwright recalls. "He stopped dead and said, 'Did I hear you mention my boss's name?' Turns out he's WWF's senior vice-president for sales." The executive comped the thespians for a WWF spectacle, and Glucksman is looking for more: a loaner WWF wrestler or two, or at the very least a fight choreographer. With a Morris acolyte already in the picture, can the collaborative *Hard Nut 2: The Santa Smackdown* be far behind?

ETHAN SMITH

MONEY Harlem's Breakfast of Champions

WE'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT THE NEWLY TRANSFORMED, ready-to-reach-out Rudy Giuliani. Now he has a chance to prove it, by responding to a personal invitation from the Reverend Calvin Butts. This week's Harlem Renaissance Day breakfast has a lineup of sponsors you'd expect from the typical trendy Manhattan fund-raiser: Chase, American Express, Bell Atlantic, Citicorp, Bill Blass, Calvin Klein, and Oscar de la Renta (as well as this magazine). It might sound like the kind of worthy but not especially compelling event that usually brings wealthy people to the Plaza or the Waldorf to learn about the minority community. But the annual Renaissance breakfast, which raises money for the Abyssinian Development Corporation, demands a bit more of a commitment. Attendees actually have to go to 138th Street, and at 7:30 in the morning. It's a testament to both the work done by Abyssinian and the intense level of interest in Harlem that the event has grown in just five years from barely 100 people to more than 600. And while $100,000 was raised the first year, this week that figure will approach $550,000. The event has gotten so big that the only community locale able to accommodate it is the Great Hall at City College. But despite the importance of the breakfast as a community event, the smart money says 138th Street is still a little farther than the mayor is willing to travel.

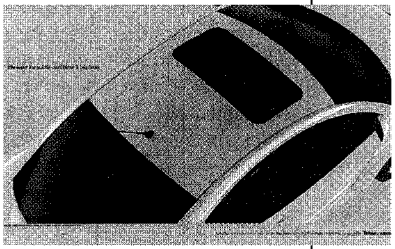
CRAIG HOROWITZ

BRAND X

The Bug in the Web

BRAND: New Beetle **AGENCY:** Arnold Communications **CREATIVE DIRECTOR:** Ron Lawner

THE NEW BEETLE, THE MODERN-DAY "people's car," is going semi-couture. In its cheery new series of TV spots and print ads, VW is drumming up interest for its customizable Online Buying System by creating buzz about two special-edition New Beetle colors available only through the Internet. If you want a "Reflex Yellow" or "Vapor Blue" bug, you have no choice but to visit vw.com, where you can arrange everything from floor mats to financing. In a consumer age revolutionized by the iMac, VW's smart enough to know that color choice—and the sense of personal connection that comes from choosing a color—is a killer app. And in keeping with VW's stellar advertising track record, the new ads play off wry sell lines: "We went for subtle and blew it big time" (for the bright yellow) and "It's what happens when blue sees a ghost" (for the pale blue). VW needed a new shtick right about now—the revived bug's design has hardly changed at all since its '98 debut. And though making a big deal about new hues is a bit like Britney Spears's releasing a new record—same music, different outfit—the online-only colors do make for a truly Net-ready sales proposition: The broadband car for the masses is now available in narrowcast colors.



SIMON DUMENCO

Illustration by Danny Hellman.

GOTHAM REALESTATE

REALTY BITES

Together Again

Robber barons reclaim city castles.

THE NEW ECONOMY MAY BE BRINGING in a new Gilded Age, but Manhattan is minting way more kajillionaires than there are mansions and full-floor apartments. "Nothing out there is big enough anymore," says Douglas Elliman's Iva Spitzer. Buyers "want to think they're living in a house—even within a building." So instead of merely connecting a couple of postwar boxes, the newly rich are reassembling Edwardian palaces that were divided during a more egalitarian age. At 190 Riverside Drive, a turn-of-the-century building that's going condo (Spitzer is the broker for the conversion), apartment 4C spent years as a trio of nicely detailed one-bedrooms. After nine months of renovation—"really restoration," says Spitzer—it was a four-bedroom, four-bathroom spread with maid's room and library. (It just sold for $2.875 million, after a whole ten days on the market; others in the building are getting the same treatment.) A similar reattachment took place at 67 Riverside Drive, where two apartments per floor had become four. Owner Enma Baron, a Corcoran broker, rejoined her apartment to an amputated one-bedroom to restore the 1905 layout. (She bought the one-bedroom a few years ago, then sublet it for a while before knocking down the wall.) Laura Matiz, a Bellmarc broker, turned a one-bedroom and a studio on East 82nd Street back into a classic seven—and snagged it for herself. (Brokers really do get the best places!) Of course, these homeowners aren't curators, and expansion rather than true restoration is really the goal. "At the turn of the century, the kitchen was where the cook stayed, and it was in the back somewhere," notes Spitzer. "So we've been relocating the kitchens, so they have river views." CHRISTOPHER BONANOS

Only on Park Avenue, Kids

Cindy Adams gives up on plan to sell place for $11 million.

BACK IN FEBRUARY, CINDY ADAMS HAD THE idea to try to sell her penthouse at 475 Park Avenue, which she'd bought from the Doris Duke estate in 1997 for $1.4 million, for $11 million. Brokers were skeptical; one of the half-dozen she asked for an estimate said the price should be closer to $6.5 million. The 3,000-square-foot place has nine rooms, 1,000 square feet of terraces, and a maintenance of $3,200 a month. Two months later, she signed a contract to buy the 2,800-square-foot duplex owned by post-eighties couple Jay McInerney and Helen Bransford, who are divorcing. It's in the hoity-toity Carlyle House at 50 East 77th Street, which offers room service from the adjacent hotel. They had awkwardly combined two apartments and tried to sell it for $3.5 million in 1998 before trying again for $2.5 last October. Adams passed the co-op board but then backed out of the deal, though sources say she managed not to lose all of her deposit. According to her office, she decided not to buy or sell because "she had a change of heart." CARL SWANSON

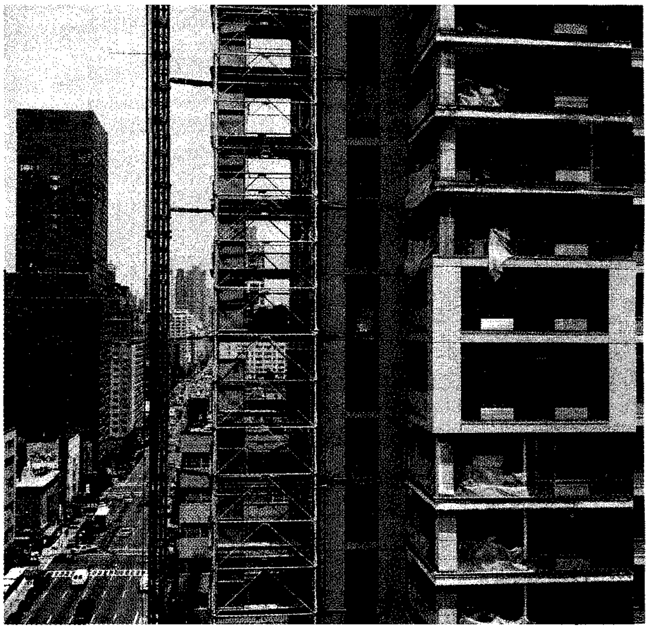
BIG DEALS

Midtown East

401 East 60th Street

Three-bedroom, three-bath, 2,007-square-foot condominium. Asking: $1.865 million. Selling: $1.865 million. Charges and taxes: $1,990. Time on market: two months.

"NOTHING SURPRISED THEM," says American Real Estate Group's Hideko Horiguchi of this apartment's buyers. "They're from San Francisco"—maybe the only real-estate market as nasty as New York's. It was dot-com money, of course, that got a couple with one child (and another on the way) this three-bedroom thirty-second-floor place in the Bridge Tower rising near the new Conran shop. The apartment will be done by Christmas, but the family won't be moving; they bought it for visits. Why so much room? "They said, 'The maid has to come,' " says Horiguchi. They'll feel right at home: Their view includes the Roosevelt Island tram—really just a cable car in the sky. C.B.



Bridge, anyone? 401 East 60th, a part-time home for millionaires with maids.

Upper East Side

176 East 75th Street

Four-bedroom, four-bath, 4,320-square-foot townhouse. Asking: $4.5 million. Selling: $5 million.Time on market: three weeks.

THIS FOUR-STORY CARRIAGE house was once owned by the late playwright Muriel Resnick, best known for *Any Wednesday*, a 1964 Broadway hit about a rich guy's weekly romps with his mistress (the wife comes by; high jinks ensue). Her estate sold it in 1996 for $1.5 million to a Wall Street family that got rid of the first-floor office and turned it into a four-bedroom house with A/C and a family room off the garden. Then, this spring, "they came back to me and said, 'We're moving out of the city,' " says Leslie Garfield, the broker who sold it to them. The buyers, brought in by Stribling & Associates, were coming from a Park Avenue place that they sold in a week for about $2.3 million in cash. Pressed for time, they were willing to bid up the price for the carriage house to $500,000 over ask, which should help get the sellers started in Connecticut. C.S.

Photographs: top, Robin Platzer/Twin Images; bottom, Sean Hemmerle

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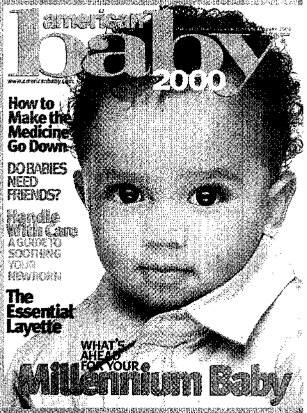
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LeSportsac

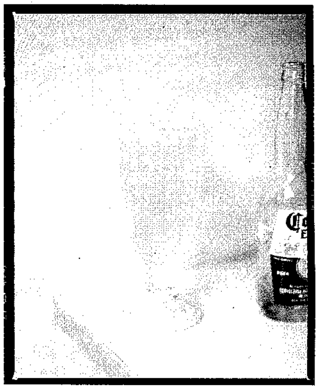
The Great Pretender

Even if imitation isn't sincere, it's still flattery, so the Fendi sisters should be feeling pretty good right about now. LeSportsac's new Kiki bag is a sequin-speckled nylon take on the high-priced baguettes that celebrities, socialites, fashion editors, and the generally fabulous have been guarding with their lives against errant cigarettes and glasses of wine. Sterling-silver buckles, hand-stitching, beading, and embroidery aside, the real difference is on the price tag: $68, compared with up to $5,000 for a Fendi. The Kiki has already been spotted dangling from the arms of Kate Hudson, Marisa Tomei, and Andie MacDowell—proof that even those who can afford the real thing may not be able to afford the dry-cleaning bills.

SARAH BROWN

mella
mella

Lime Aid



Globetrotters with a taste for the tartier things in life have already sucked down France's panachés (two thirds beer, one third lemonade) and England's half-beer, half-lemonade shandys. Now regulars at Cafe Habana (17 Prince Street; 212-625-2001) are quenching their thirst with the chelada, a Mexican beer-on-ice drink that's mixed with a shot of lime juice and served in a salt-rimmed glass. Most are throwing back the Corona-spiked concoctions just after breakfast—that's how light and Sprite-like the cocktail is. "Cheladas remind me of Mexico," says one enthusiast, who drank them growing up south of the border. "And who would have thought you could get vitamin C from alcohol?"

KRISTINA RICHARDS

Footing the Bill

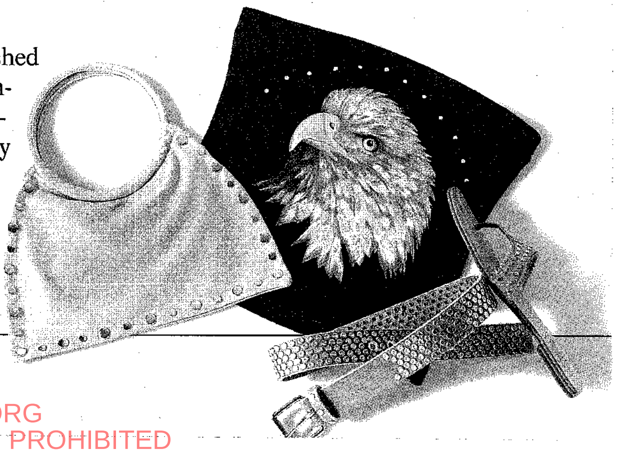
While the rest of the city is clopping around in rubber thongs from Old Navy, there's a group of flip-flop cognoscenti for whom only Ultrasuede, denim and ribbons, and python-embossed cottons will do. "Two-dollar flip-flops look like $2 flip-flops," sniffs Ria Jeon, the 27-year-old Daryl K marketing executive who created a higher-end version of the ubiquitous summer shoe when she wanted a polished compromise between her wintery Michel Perry stiletto boots and the Chinatown slides she shuffled around in last summer. Jeon's flip-flops, which sell under the label Mella at Henri Bendel, Mayle, Hedra Prue, and Scoop, run $44 to $62—which means there's not *quite* as much left over for pedicures.

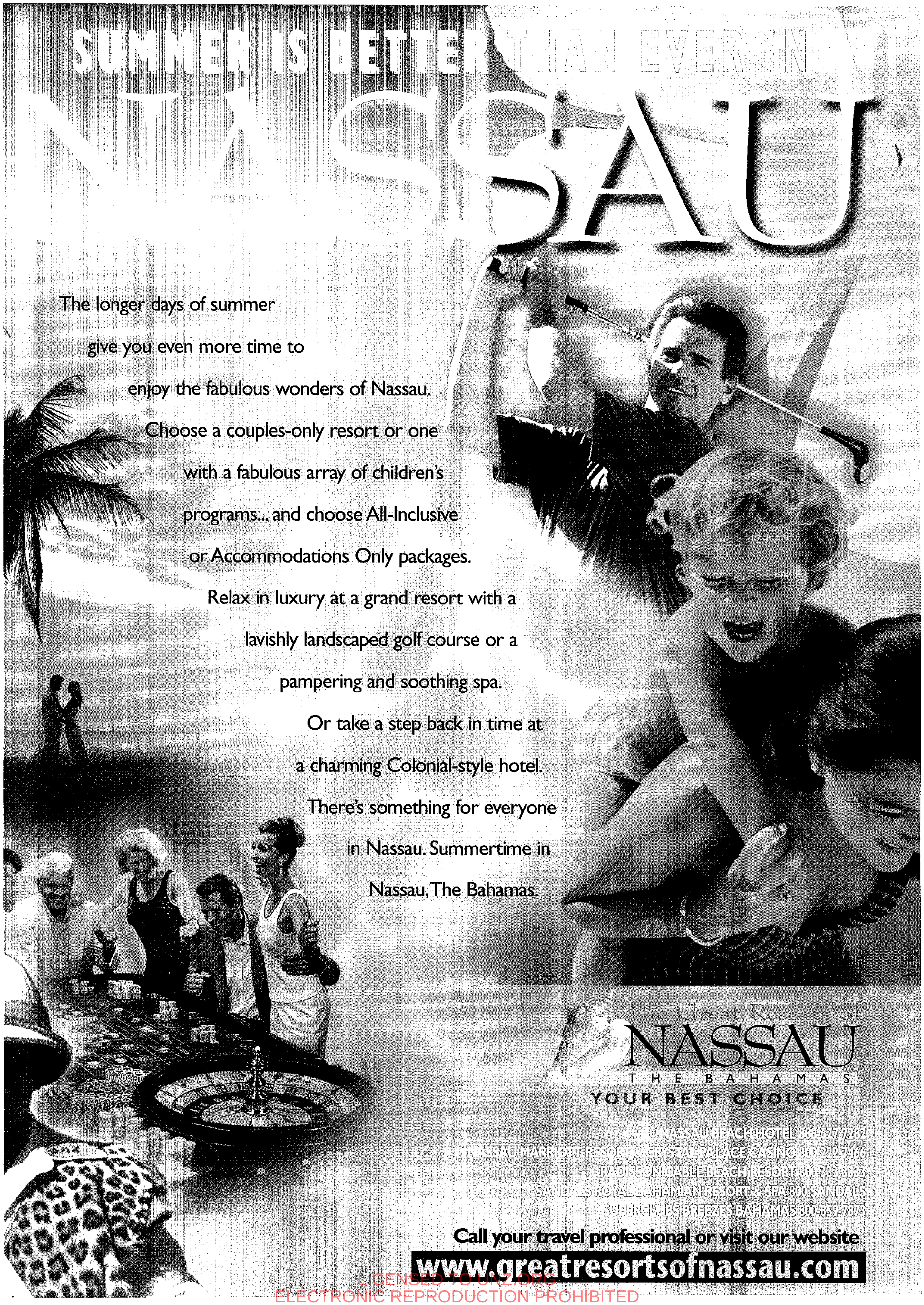
K.R.

Metal Heads

Even if you've already filled your closet with pleather pants and airbrushed Chloé tank tops, no Chrissie Hynde wannabe's wardrobe would be complete without some studded rocker gear. The metal years are being revisited at Kooba, where studs are stamped on an otherwise dainty leather bag ($250 at Language); at H&M, where they're scattered across eagle-print tube tops ($17); at Cynthia Rowley, where they adorn leather thong sandals ($145); and at DKNY, where they decorate neon belts ($48). If only you hadn't chucked those Fiorucci belts from high school.

SARAH BERNARD





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THE SCENE

Urban Outfitters

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

THE COSMO-SIPPING CROWD AT GUASTAVINO'S ON MAY 30 proved that New Yorkers *are* ready for more—more single-girl escapades from HBO's *Sex and the City.* Following a screening of the first two episodes of season three, cast members Sarah Jessica Parker, Kristin Davis, Cynthia Nixon, Kim Cattrall, Chris Noth, and Kyle MacLachlan trooped over to Terence Conran's eatery for a bright-lights-big-city afterparty. Designers Betsey Johnson and Cynthia Rowley showed up to weigh in on the outrageous outfits of Parker's character, Carrie Bradshaw. "I was so inspired," squealed Rowley, gold hoop earrings swinging. "What you see on the show *becomes* fashion," said Russell Simmons, outfitted in his own Phat Farm regalia. "We went for the hoochie look this season," explained Parker, looking perfectly mismatched in a Chloé top and a brown sequined Prada skirt, but a bit more sedate than Carrie, who struts her stuff onscreen in fur, fourteen-karat gold, and nary a blowout. The only problem with the way Carrie dresses? "It's no longer good enough to spend a quarter of our money on clothing," said a Pamela Dennis–clad Candace Bushnell, writer of the column and book the show is based on. "Now we have to spend *all* of our money on clothing." KRISTINA RICHARDS

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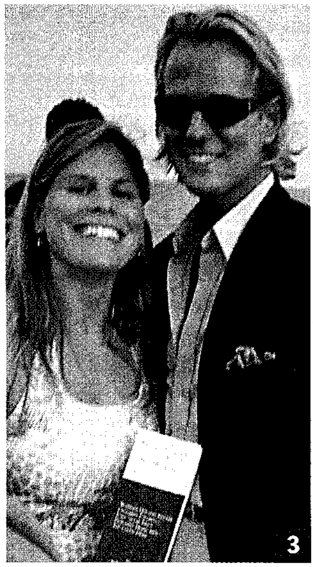
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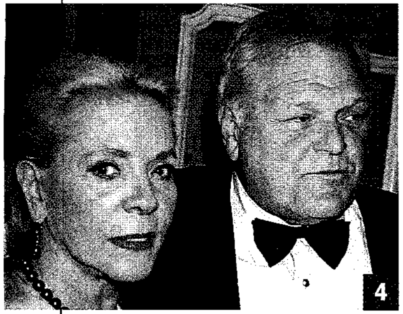
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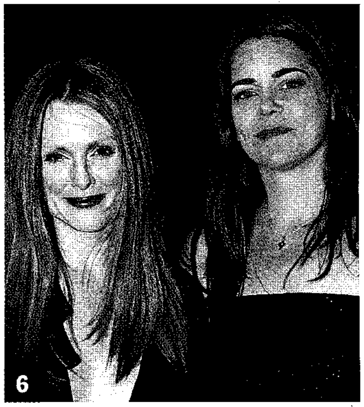
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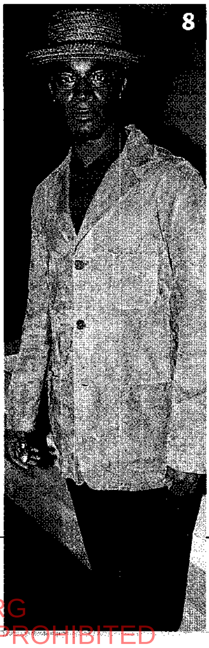
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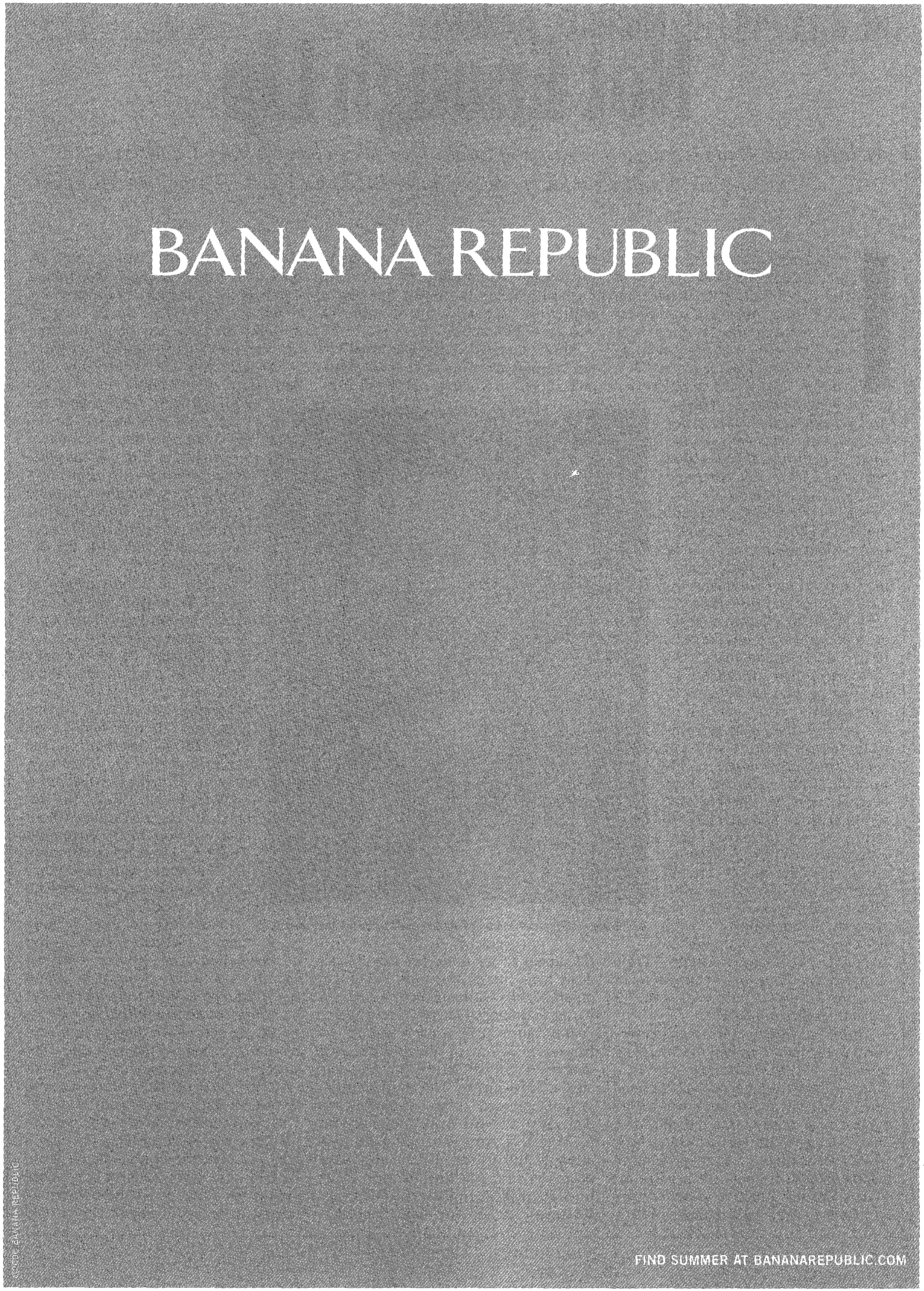
1. Darren Star and Sarah Jessica Parker at the *Sex and the City* screening. 2. Eve and Drag-On at Eminem's record-release party at One51. 3. Jodi Della Femina and Daniel Benedict celebrating her book *Shortcuts 2000* at the Della Feminas' home in East Hampton. 4. Lauren Bacall and Brian Dennehy at the National Corporate Theatre Fund tribute to Bacall, Dennehy, Matthew C. Blank, and Daryl Roth at the Waldorf-Astoria. 5. Janice Combs, Denise Rich, Natalie Cole, Dennis Basso, and Star Jones at Basso's fashion show at the Pierre. 6. Julianne Moore and Dr. Enid Haller at the Aqua Ball 2000 benefit at Spa. 7. Paul Volcker and Happy Rockefeller at the Plaza for the International House seventy-fifth-anniversary gala. 8. Taye Diggs at Lotus for the Officine Panerai and *GQ* party for the Museum Collection of vintage naval timepieces. 9. Sam Haskell, Frank and Kathie Lee Gifford, and Eric Schotz at '21,' toasting the William Morris Agency's network-television sales season.



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THE CITY POLITIC MICHAEL TOMASKY

Not Enough Lip

At least with Rudy we knew the race would be about more than Hillary's address; but in their bland scrabble for the middle, Rick and Hill are tough to tell apart.

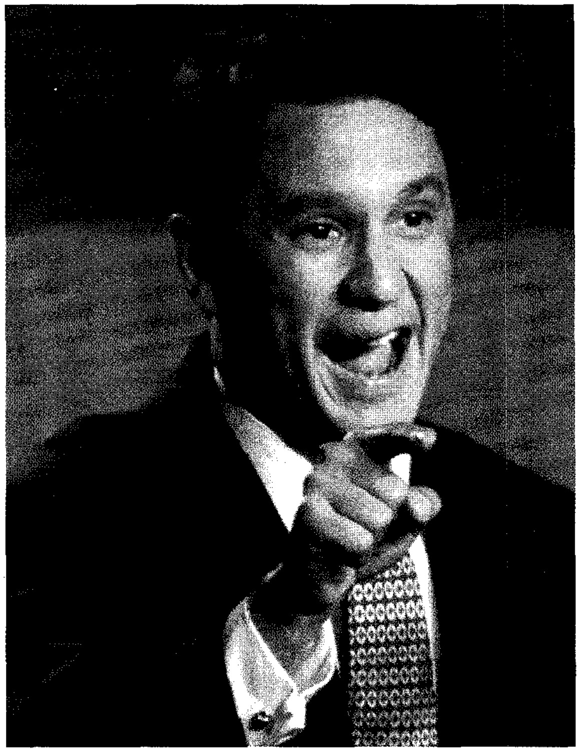
IT WAS ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH Rick Lazio's acceptance speech at the Republican state convention last Tuesday, after he'd worked his way through the "I am a New Yorker" business and begun laying out positions, that the sense of déjà vu took hold. *I've heard all of this somewhere before,* I thought. *And yet not in this accent. But recently. And repeatedly. In the same arid rhetorical tones, and delivered with much the same sententious earnestness.*

Then I remembered. I'd heard it all from Hillary. I assure you, I take no journalistic license here whatsoever for the sake of making the point more dramatically. Lazio's speech was—is—Hillary's.

He wants to bring New Yorkers together. He decries the politics of division and rejects the very idea (!) that one can lead by dividing people. He believes in opportunity *and* responsibility. He believes that what government does, it must do well. He wants to expand access to affordable health care. And help needy seniors get cheaper prescription drugs. Price stability for farmers. Lower taxes (yes, Hillary has said even this). A balanced approach to the budget surplus, the protection of Social Security of course being the paramount concern. Strengthening the public-school system, with higher standards. "Using federal funds," Lazio declared, to "buy new computers or more textbooks, to reduce class size or expand teacher training."

This is New Democrat–speak in every distressing manifestation: the intentional vagueness, the certainty that not a single syllable could conceivably offend any living soul, and so on. It was awfully hard to imagine, as the speech ended, that this was the sort of thing New York's Republicans, to say nothing of people like Mike Long, the head of the state's Conservative Party, really were prepared to rally behind, and early evidence indicated that I wasn't alone in the thought. As I walked out of the hall, I heard a delegate on his cell phone muttering, "It was . . . fine. I mean, he was good. You know."

Always more revealing than what's in these speeches is what's left out of them, and purged from Lazio's text were any references to anything the Republican Party has actually stood for. No tough-on-crime talk. Nothing about welfare. A strong national defense? Not a word. Family values at best wanly implied by passing mentions of his wife and two daughters. Broad, across-the-board tax cuts not in evidence. The word *abortion* never mentioned, either to support or to denounce it. No Second Amendment. No vouchers. Not even a lusty denunciation of Bill Clinton—this must have been the first meeting of more than three Republicans in America in the past seven years where *that* didn't happen.



Dem bones? GOP values were MIA during Lazio's acceptance speech.

THE POLITICAL MOTIVE FOR LAZIO'S APproach is obvious enough. The strategy is to hold the center and try to push Mrs. Clinton off to the left, and it's fine for now. But there are two things this strategy is not: (a) interesting and (b) honest.

Say what you will about Rudy Giuliani (and the Republicans I talked with last week seemed genuinely relieved that he had bowed out), but one thing the mayor had going for him was his emotional honesty—his often infuriating and yet oddly admirable bluntness. This was only just beginning to contrast rather advantageously with Mrs. C's obtuse guardedness.

Despite all the reasons to be against the mayor's Senate candidacy, he had just offered up a good reason to be for it—to see if a politician could not only throw away but basically take a blowtorch to all known rules governing the treacly image politicians and their families are supposed to present to the world, and win an election in spite of, or perhaps because of, it. With the New Rudy, the Republicans had a candidate whose taste for smashing convention would have made a stark emotional contrast with Hillary. Instead, they have a candidate who is trying to be like her.

Like everyone else, I don't know yet who Rick Lazio is. But it seems impossible to me that the speech I heard last week really represented who he is. We'll learn more about his voting record and the battles he's engaged—or dodged—as time goes on, but it's hard to believe the sum and substance of his career amounts to the moderate-to-liberal softballs he tossed into the sweaty hotel-ballroom air last week.

It's partly a question of the record. On the same day Lazio became his party's nominee, abortion-rights activists in Buffalo were holding a press conference noting that Lazio, on 94 abortion-rights-related votes in his House career, had

Photograph from AP/Wide World.

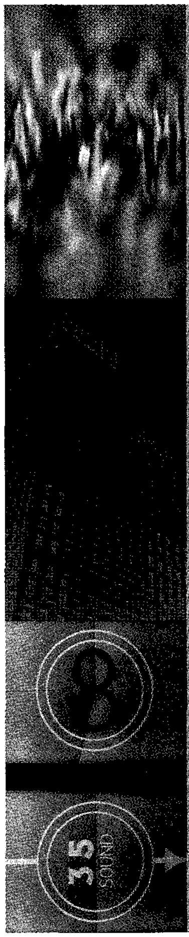
voted pro-choice a little more than half the time. Does this arrangement of pro and con votes represent some consistent principle or mere opportunism? We'll find out soon enough, but ducking abortion completely, as he did last Tuesday, suggests that this issue—and this senator, whoever it ends up being, will in all likelihood vote on the confirmation of three Supreme Court nominees—is one he'd rather not discuss.

But it's about more than his record. It's about what he really believes. Of course he'll push furiously at the "I'm from New York" button, and it's possible, unless Hillary finds a way to counter it, that that argument alone may end up being enough for him. It shouldn't be. He should have to reveal something more to us about how he sees the world. From last Tuesday, all that can be gleaned is that he's for the American Dream. I doubt many people expected him to go on record against it.

> *"Lazio should have to reveal something more to us. From last Tuesday, all that can be gleaned is that* **he's for the American Dream.** *I doubt many people expected him to go on record against it."*

SO HERE WE ARE: TWO CANDIDATES, BOTH straining to be as bland and uncontroversial as they can possibly be. I say: Victory will belong to the one who breaks out of the shell and does something that's actually interesting to people. I'd like to see Lazio behave in a way that will make us quit describing him as boyish and likable. I'd love to see Mrs. Clinton walk into a roomful of white women, in Scarsdale or someplace, and say, *No, I never wanted to leave him, of course he behaved like a jerk and of course I was embarrassed, but he's the man I married and my marriage is nobody's business but mine and my husband's, and if it really means that much to you, well, vote against me.* People would love it. They'd compare it to Rudy's Judith Nathan moment. But she doesn't have the nerve. A quality the new guy seems to lack, too. ■

E-mail: tomasky@aol.com



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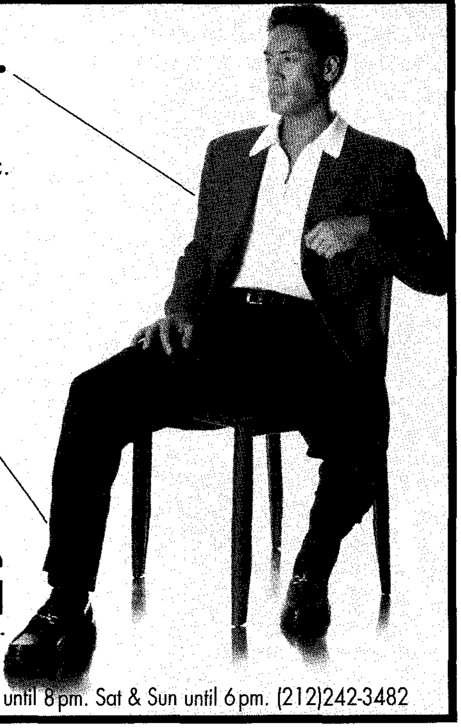

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THE BOTTOM LINE JAMES J. CRAMER

Bombs Away!

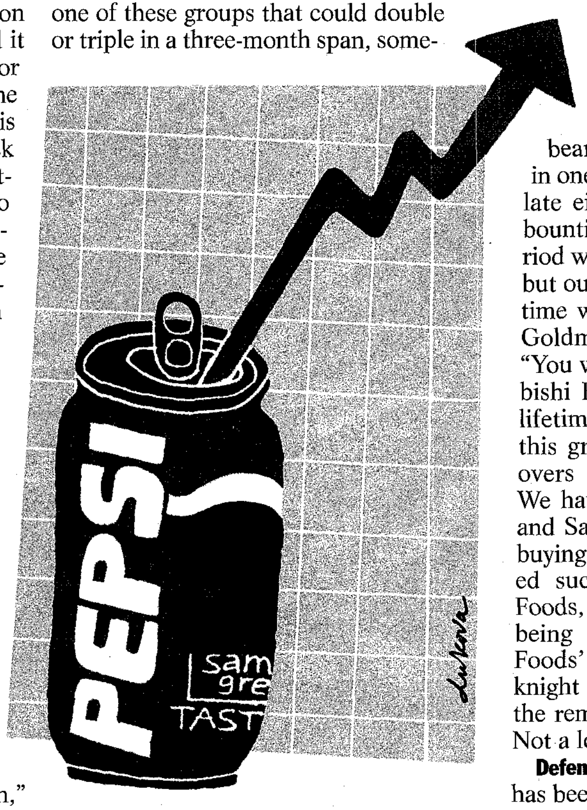
So what if tech tanked? Before it bounces back, there's money to be made in less glamorous sectors, like tobacco and defense. (What, you got a problem with that?)

PEOPLE HATE THE STOCK MARKET right now. They despise it because of their newfound losses. And they can't believe that their favorite stocks, many of which have been cut in half, can go still lower. They wish they had sold everything on March 10, the NASDAQ'S top, and find it hard to even look at the stock tables or their monthly statements. But is it the stock market that they really hate, or is it technology, that portion of the stock market that has come to define investing for us in the past five years? Do they really abhor a portfolio of balanced stocks, or do they consider the stock market to be Cisco, Intel, Microsoft, and a couple more wild tech names that made people fortunes during the great Bull Run?

I'm no Pollyanna. But I was born to search for bull markets wherever I can. And I am happy to report that there are a few bull markets that are alive and well right now, not gushers but decent money-makers, even if the NASDAQ continues to falter.

Don't bother looking in any of the old familiar haunts: semiconductors, software, contract manufacturing, computers, wireless, and, I am afraid to say, even fiber optics, which is the last region in what was once a boiling tech market. These well-trodden areas are in what stock-market folk call "distribution," meaning they are struggling to find *real* owners, not the margined transients who took so much of this stuff down at much higher levels. I am reluctant to call tech a bear market because that rubric comes with too much baggage. The "fundamentals," the actual core businesses of tech, are doing fantastically. In fact, the biggest negative is the lack of supply—there aren't enough components to make all of the tech equipment needed to meet worldwide demand. The stocks simply got well ahead of the prospects; they were too richly valued for management to meet the expectations set for them by worshipful buyers. When these stocks come down enough, they will reignite and become excellent buys. But they aren't there yet.

While these stocks cool, however, mini–bull markets abound. You just need to know where to look for them. They don't offer the rewards of technology investing, meaning that there isn't one of these groups that could double or triple in a three-month span, something that became commonplace for hot tech areas before the market topped. But they offer something that has become a bit like gold in the mountains of dirt and rock—they offer real *gains.*



So here's your guide to the five paths that are making people money in the toughest market anybody has seen in six years—that's six years since the *last* time the Federal Reserve started aggressively tightening up on interest rates as a way to cool an economy it thought was getting way too hot. Back then, in 1994, this stuff worked best right when the gloom set in, just as people began to realize that the economy was indeed slowing and that plenty of companies that needed a strong economy would not live up to expectations.

That's where we are right now in 2000, so why not go with what worked in the past? That's what we're doing at Cramer Berkowitz, and we have a ton of money on the line. This isn't just idle cocktail-party chatter about how crummy the market has become; this is how we're working the market.

Food stocks: Talk about bear markets. This group has been in one since Pillsbury got a bid in the late eighties. Once the province of bountiful yearly gains during the period when the Japanese conquered all but our dining table (yes, there was a time when I sold the food stocks at Goldman Sachs with the tag line "You will never see a bottle of Mitsubishi Ketchup on your table in our lifetime, so why not buy Heinz?"), this group is back, filled with takeovers and stable growth prospects. We have come to like General Mills and Sara Lee and have even debated buying Kellogg, a company we shorted successfully for a decade. Best Foods, one of the choicest of the lot, is being pursued by Unilever. Best Foods' attempts to roust a white knight could pay off with suitors for the remaining players in the industry. Not a lot of risk, some decent reward.

Defense stocks: Holy cow, this group has been clobbered. Once loved for its consistent earnings, under Clinton this group became the whipping boy of almost every branch of the government. Things have gotten so negative for these companies that the military now frets that some of them aren't strong enough to survive. But as the Federal Reserve

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Illustration by Luba Lukova.

keeps tightening, expect to see more people join the Republican fold. A Bush win should make this group double in price. Lockheed, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and General Dynamics will all benefit.

Tobacco: Ouch, I hate writing positive things about these guys. But the ethical dilemma of making money off these stocks has been resolved by my clients, who demand performance and don't demand asterisks about which stocks I make them money with. Right now I'm making it with tobacco, and the best performer is Philip Morris, a company that seems to be morphing into Kraft as I write. Kraft is worth more than the price of the stock, and if you can stomach the litigation, you have a chance for a 30 percent move in a relatively short time.

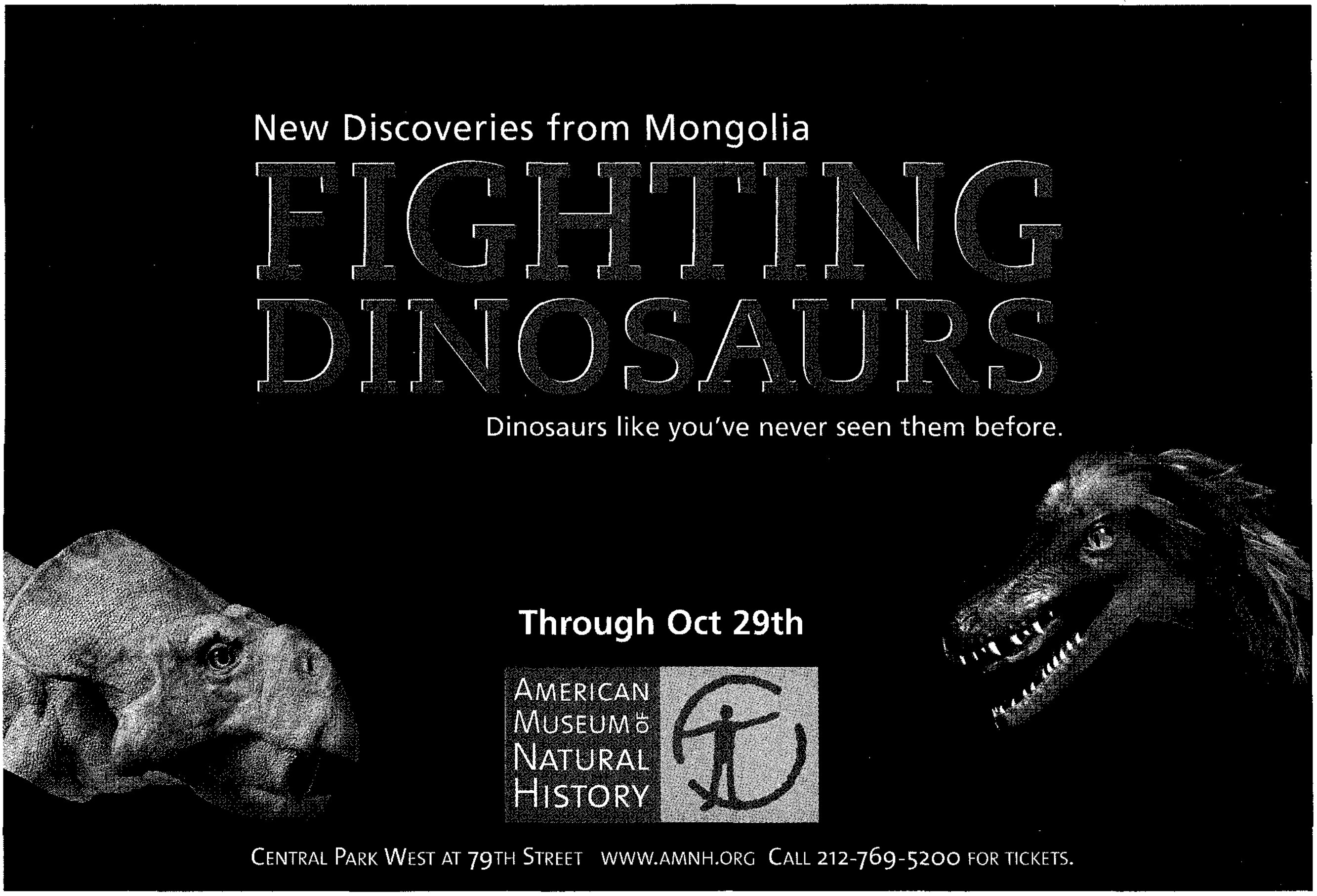
Hospitals and managed care: Another group that has been in bear mode while technology romped. As the economy slows, the earnings of these recession-proof stocks should shine brightly. Two of my favorites, which I am waiting for a pullback to buy, are United American Healthcare and HCA, the old Columbia Healthcare. The latter just settled a huge fine and is putting its sins behind it.

Beverages: Everything from Pepsi to Bud's been rocking ever since the market peaked three months ago. Normally, I would say these stocks have had too much of a run, but considering that they have done virtually nothing for years and years, they may have some further upside in them yet, especially if the Fed decides to inflict more pain on us in the form of another round of interest-rate hikes.

I KNOW THERE ISN'T AN "INTERESTING" stock among them. I know that no one talks about these stocks at parties, no one brags about these holdings during commercials between Knicks games. But we are entering a phase where talking about the market is like talking about a death in the family. You do it circumspectly, as you never know who just incurred ruinous losses. Maybe a boring portfolio is just what is needed to get you through this era of newly lowered stock expectations.

And what do you do with all of that technology that you loaded up on during the great bull run in these stocks? Frankly, it is too late to sell most of the decimated stuff. Seems like dead money to us until we are farther along in the slowdown. If the pattern of seven years ago holds, three months from now we will want to jump back into tech. It is the opportunity cost of waiting while these other stocks work that we find unforgivable. We would rather make money in what's working—I didn't earn the nickname "the Reverend of the Church of What's Happening Now" for nothing—than stare at stocks that seem to go up three and down three with Ferris-wheel-like regularity, ending exactly where they started when the ride began. ▬

James J. Cramer is manager of a hedge fund and co-founder of TheStreet.com. At time of publication, his fund had positions in Best Foods, Cisco Systems, General Mills, Intel, Microsoft, Pepsi, Philip Morris, and Sara Lee. His fund often buys and sells securities that are the subject of his columns, both before and after the columns are published, and the positions that his fund takes may change at any time. Under no circumstances does the information in this column represent a recommendation to buy or sell stocks. Cramer's writings provide insights into the dynamics of money management and are not a solicitation for transactions. While he cannot provide investment advice or recommendations, he invites comments at jjcletters@thestreet.com.



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THE GREEN TEAM

TWELVE YEARS AGO, A TRIO OF WALL STREET UPSTARTS FOUNDED THE ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ROBIN HOOD FOUNDATION. SO HOW DID A GUERRILLA CHARITY BENEFIT BECOME THE HOTTEST TICKET IN TOWN?

BY MERYL GORDON

SURE, THERE ARE MORE *EXCLUSIVE* EVENTS—A QUIET DINNER for six at Brooke Astor's, perhaps, or an evening of restaurant-hopping on the Upper East Side with Rudy and Judi. But by the heightened criteria that tend to matter most to New Yorkers these days—wall-to-wall glamour, enough boldface names to make "Page Six" kvell, and a wealth index somewhere around the gross national product of Denmark—this has got to be the most prestigious party you can buy your way into, either by writing a (gulp!) $2,000-a-plate check or, more to the point, by paying $10,000 per couple to guarantee you won't be seated in Siberia. • Eat your heart out, trustees of the Metropolitan Museum's Costume Institute Ball: You've been eclipsed. With a star-studded benefit committee that includes Gwyneth Paltrow and Lachlan Murdoch plus entertainment by the Who, this Tuesday's extravaganza at the Javits Center won't be matched by any other charity evening anytime soon. The event will raise more than $8 million (a city record for a single charity event) to

Photographs: this page, Roxanne Lowit; opposite, Robert Huber/Lookat.

THE GOOD SQUAD
Opposite, Robin Hood founder Paul Tudor Jones with John F. Kennedy Jr. and Jones's wife, Sonia, at the June 1991 benefit; this page, Robin Hood executive director David Saltzman and students of the East Harlem School.

benefit the quaintly named Robin Hood Foundation. As Robin Williams, the evening's emcee, put it: "It's going to be better than a bar mitzvah at Barbra Streisand's."

Started as something of a lark by three rich young Wall Street traders in 1988, the Robin Hood Foundation has become known as New York's most innovative backer of eclectic good works, financing gritty neighborhood programs to aid the defeated and desperately needy. Where other high-octane charities benefit such upmarket causes as the opera, the ballet, and the Met's fashion collection, Robin Hood actually lives up to its namesake's slogan of stealing from the rich to give to the poor. (Or in this case, *persuading* the rich to *invest* in the poor.)

Paul Tudor Jones, a Memphis-born commodities trader who now manages $5 billion in assets, launched the charity with the notion of applying a stock-picker's mentality to backing poverty programs. "We thought part of our job should be to provide seed capital to someone with a good idea," says Jones, now 45, who recruited fellow traders Glenn Dubin and Peter Borish to his cause. "We wanted to make sure we didn't just do the safe grants; we wanted to try to find the Microsofts of the philanthropy world."

What Robin Hood has become known for—whether it's a Harlem soup kitchen, a Sunset Park job-training program, or a Bronx counseling effort to prevent child abuse—is an activist approach that goes well beyond merely writing large checks. Led by executive director David Saltzman, the foundation's twenty-person staff (Ivy League grads, M.B.A.'s, lawyers, inner-city activists) gets directly involved in the daily operations of the help-the-poor groups it funds. This year, it is providing more than $18 million to 100 programs, and in return for their investment, the foundation demands results, cutting off funding if programs don't deliver on their promises. Christine Letts, executive director of the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Harvard, says, "I think Robin Hood is one of the best models of venture philanthropy. No one else does the package of things they do."

Over the past decade, *venture philanthropy* has become the buzz phrase among newly rich guilt-edged entrepreneurs eager to prove their smarts in yet another challenging arena. Elbowing their way into territory long defined by heavyweights like the Ford Foundation, members of this charity-minded younger generation have rejected the idea of long-term studies and blue-ribbon commissions—they want to make a difference in the blink of a NASDAQ trade. Recent convert Bill Gates may now throw hundreds of millions of dollars at poverty and illness, but the Robin Hood gang helped invent this new form of fast-action, quick-results charitable giving.

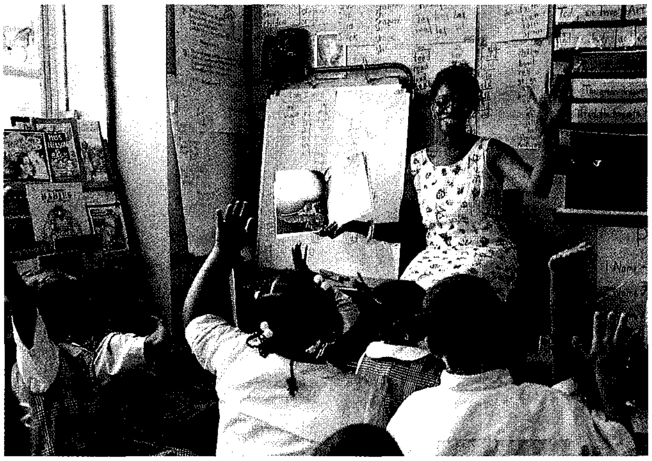
Of course, it didn't hurt that Robin Hood, in its earliest days, became known as one of the late John Kennedy Jr.'s favorite charities. By joining the Robin Hood board in 1991, he gave this do-good venture fund an aura of glamour that helped turn the annual June gala into the hottest ticket on the charity circuit; when he died last summer, the foundation received an outpouring of sympathy donations.

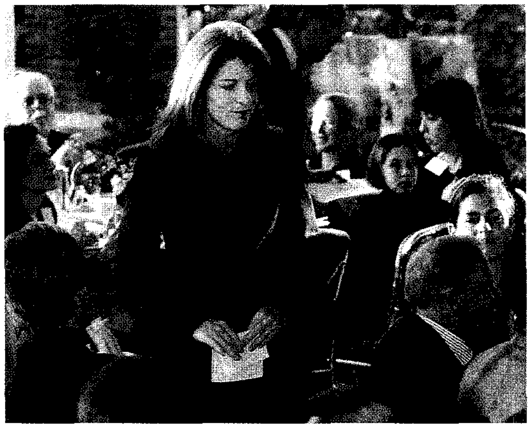
But the rest of Robin Hood's board members are hardly unknowns; in fact, it would be hard to find a better-connected group in town. "I don't personally have a clue about the social stuff; I don't understand it," says Kenneth Langone, the founder of Home Depot and, at 64, the oldest member of the mostly thirty- and fortysomething Robin Hood board. Yet he admits, sounding slightly amused, that "this has become the board to be on." Indeed, the nineteen-member board resembles a movie-screening A-list, including AOL guru Bob Pittman, John Sykes of VH1, former Soros Fund honcho Stanley Druckenmiller, Marie-Josée Kravis, and this year's new members Diane Sawyer, Harvey Weinstein, Lachlan Murdoch, and Universal Music chairman Doug Morris.

The Wall Street contingent freely admit that they've wooed the latest celebrities to add fund-raising pizzazz. "The truth is, I'm not that interesting, Paul's not that interesting, Stan's not that interesting," says Peter Kiernan III, the board's current chairman and a managing director at Goldman Sachs. "Last year, we had a benefit that raised $6.5 million, more than any other one-night event in the city. John Kennedy packed them in. If we can get that number to $10 million by bringing Harvey and Diane in, I'm game."

One reason the Robin Hood foundation has placed such importance on this week's Javits jamboree is that until recently, the wealthy board members, so used to being hit up for large sums of cash by others, found it socially uncomfortable to do so themselves. "The reason Robin Hood hasn't done better on donations is that we don't like to ask people for money," confesses Stanley Druckenmiller. "I'm terrible about it." Another board member jokes, "We have ask-itis. This stuff you'd think we'd be aces at, it's not our long suit."

Yet as Robin Hood's Q rating ratchets up, the foundation's top players are not





CLASS ACTS **Clockwise from left, a class at Friends of the Family Academy, funded in part by Robin Hood; Russell Simmons, Wayne Gretzky and Ronald Perelman at the 1998 benefit; Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg at the 1999 Robin Hood awards breakfast.**

Photographs: top, Noah Sheldon; bottom left, Richard Drew/AP Photo.

unaware of the dangers of drifting deeper into Tom Wolfe territory—the ironies of Park Avenue's stepping out to aid Bed-Stuy, and swells' donning designer duds to dine on Glorious Food's canapés while thinking uplifting thoughts about the downtrodden. ("I can't wait until the Who sings 'Street Fighting Man' for this crowd," riffs Williams, mangling the authorship of the Rolling Stones classic.) There's something jarring about an event in which Ron Perelman once forked over $100,000 for a hockey lesson from Wayne Gretzky (ice skates not included), with the cash going to programs that aid ex-cons and AIDS babies.

This incongruity has not gone unnoticed by board members, who are thrilled by the financial windfall but sheepish about giving a party regularly anointed by the New York *Times'* "Evening Hours" column as one of the city's most memorable galas. "I have mixed feelings," says board member Peter Borish, one of Robin Hood's founders, who runs his own money-management firm, the Computer Trading Corporation. "The prices are high, which keeps people out that you want to go. Here we are, giving the most lavish benefit to help people who have a lot going against them. It's ironic—and it's New York. And Robin Hood is New York." Another board member described the bidding frenzy at last year's gala as Bob Pittman and Gwyneth Paltrow auctioned off weekends in Hollywood and walk-on movie roles. "To me, it's a big disconnect. But we can't not do it. It raises an enormous amount of money, and we think of all the good we can do with this money."

"WHAT APPEALED TO ME WAS THE GUERRILLA NATURE OF IT," SAYS JANN WENNER. "THEY WERE GOING TO FIND THE OUTLAWS, THE HEROES, THE PEOPLE WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE."

You can see what he's talking about the moment you walk into the forbidding concrete building that houses the East Harlem School, a private academy for low-income kids on a not-yet-gentrified block of 103rd Street. It's filled with high-spirited, hard-studying kids, who virtually all qualify for free government-lunch subsidies because their family income is below the poverty line. Seventh-grader Erika Perez, 11, chatters excitedly about the small class size (13, versus 40 in her previous public school) and the fellow students who've won scholarships to elite high schools like Miss Porter's. "The teachers are really hard on us, because they want us to get into good schools," says Perez, who gets up at 5:45 A.M. to commute from her Bronx home, and whose single mother works nights.

Founders Hans Hageman, a Princeton-educated lawyer, and his brother Ivan, a Harvard-educated teacher, were turned down all over town for grant money when they decided seven years ago to start the school in a former drug-rehab clinic that had been run by their parents. As scholarship students who had attended the Collegiate School, they finally reached out to fellow Collegiate alumnus John Kennedy Jr., who steered them to Robin Hood. Suffice it to say that a good word from Kennedy proved pivotal; the foundation handed over $25,000 and provided extensive behind-the-scenes aid, and still provides a yearly $50,000 grant. "A lot of foundations have guidelines, and if you don't fit in, they don't want you," says Hans Hageman, who has several hundred kids on a waiting list for the coveted 63 slots. "Robin Hood is not a faceless entity you're dealing with."

Just as investors swoop in when word gets out that George Soros is buying a stock, other foundations often reach for their checkbooks upon hearing that Robin Hood has "invested" in a fledgling charity. "Robin Hood is known for doing aggressive due diligence and legwork," adds Hageman. "When other foundations learn that Robin Hood is involved, it helps us."

THE GREAT TRUISM OF NEW YORK IS that you can get anything you want if you move in the right circles and know whom to ask. "What we do is all about leverage," says Peter Borish. As with any prestigious board, useful contacts are a prerequisite for being invited to join Robin Hood—say, for example, the ability to get free entertainment and other goodies for the gala. "Why else would they want the head of a record company?" says Universal Music's Doug Morris, a new board member who used his clout to get friend Pete Townshend and the other surviving members of the Who to perform for free. The Robin Hood benefit is a classic example of upper-echelon Manhattan favor-swapping. For the auction, Harvey Weinstein put together a "Hollywood Heaven" package that includes flying to Rome for a walk-on in the upcoming Martin Scorsese movie with Leonardo DiCaprio and Cameron Diaz, a bit part in the next Miramax–Gwyneth Paltrow movie, and prime Oscar seats. Lachlan Murdoch is offering up an Olympics package, including opening-ceremony tickets and a cruise with the Murdoch clan around Sydney's harbor.

Board member David Puth, a Chase Manhattan managing director, did his share by contacting venture capitalist Jeffrey Walker, who persuaded an airline to kick in free plane tickets. Liquor wasn't a problem, since half a dozen board members are friendly with Seagram's Edgar Bronfman Jr. Stan Druckenmiller called on his pal Mike Ovitz for a headliner, landing the gratis services of Robin Williams.

Robin Hood's board is more than willing to make *these* kinds of help-us calls. It's not a coincidence that the white-shoe law firms and accounting giants that "voluntarily" donate their services to the foundation's grantees do a lot of well-paid business with board members. Indeed, the Robin Hood Foundation is a quintessential example of how to use friendships, business connections, and media savvy to pull the levers of power in this city. In little more than a decade, it has evolved from three guys sitting around Paul Jones's Upper East Side one-bedroom apartment eating Chinese takeout and wondering how to save the world to a powerhouse operation that has doled out more than $100 million.

These nouveau riche Wall Streeters built their own organization from scratch so they could deliberately break traditional foundation rules. They had prospered enough to spend deadly evenings at black-tie balls with Social Register snobs, but they were tired of writing checks and never knowing how their money was spent. They thought most charities were not aggressive enough, either in making grants or in investing assets. And they decided it was better to waste money on wrongheaded ideas than never to try anything daring at all.

The three originally planned to give away just their own money, establishing a foundation for its tax advantages, but decided to get more ambitious after being deluged with grant requests. "We got 600 applications the first year, and they were heartbreaking," recalls Jones, a University of Virginia graduate who made his first few million in his twenties by trading gold and cotton futures. "As we saw the scope of need, and how big an enemy poverty was, we decided to gear up." Eager to counter the greed-is-good ethos of the movie *Wall Street,* Peter Borish, who back then worked as the research director for Jones, proposed the folk-hero moniker for the foundation. "Every kid loves Robin Hood," says Borish, now 40, who got the idea from his wife. He acknowledges that while Manhattan may not exactly be Sherwood Forest, "if you live in New York City, you can't ignore the extreme differences between the rich and the poor."

The first grants were relatively small, in the $25,000 range. A couple of guys in Bed-Stuy trying to start a local ambulance company. A traveling van to bring medical services to poor neighborhoods. An activist who wanted to renovate an East Harlem building to house the homeless. "People were being put up in these horrible places, with the smell of piss and drug dealers selling crack in the hallways," says Saltzman, the foundation's first employee, who had previously worked for the city on its approach to homeless problems. Recalling the scene as homeless families moved into the newly fixed-up apartments, Saltzman says, "People were weeping with joy."

After that emotionally gratifying experience, small wonder that Robin Hood's founders encouraged Gretchen Buchenholz, who renovated that first building, to think even bigger, with the promise of more funding. "It's scary to go out and try to create programs," says Buchenholz, executive director of the Association to Benefit Children, which has expanded to offer preschool programs for homeless children, a nursery for HIV-infected toddlers, and a job-creating bakery, receiving $200,000 last year from the foundation. "Robin Hood had faith that what we pictured could actually be done."

Similarly, Robin Hood first began to back the South Bronx–based La Peninsula Head Start in 1993. With help from the foundation's yearly $100,000 grant, the program, which provides extended-hours day care and preschool classes to 3-to-5-year-olds so their parents can work, has now expanded to serve more than 700 kids in five locations.

Beyond changing people's lives, Robin Hood's financier-founders also wanted to show they could establish a charity with a new kind of fiscal footing. Jones was appalled that foundations are required by law to give away just 5 percent of assets a year, and insisted that Robin Hood hand out 40 to 50 percent. "We're not in the wealth-building business. That dog ain't going to hunt," drawls Jones, sitting in the sprawling Greenwich offices of his investment firm. (In addition to his Greenwich home, Jones owns a private island in the Bahamas and a Maryland-shore retreat.) Given that Jones and his friends had made their fortunes as high-flying traders, they didn't see any point in establishing the typical safe foundation portfolio, investing instead in hedge funds that have brought returns of more than 20 percent a year (they earned $7 million last year on $22 million in assets, and in this volatile year the portfolio is still "comfortably positive," they say, meaning up 4 percent).

SMILING ACES **Clockwise from left, JFK Jr. and Carolyn Bessette at a Robin Hood benefit in 1996; Muhammad Ali, Paul Tudor Jones, Isaac Hayes, and Robin Hood board member Stanley Druckenmiller; students at La Peninsula Head Start in the South Bronx.**

As a way of demonstrating their personal commitment, the board members decided to take care of all of the foundation's expenses themselves, rather than use outside donations to pay the daily operating bills. "We're all aware of concerns about charitable organizations which raise a lot of money and it all goes to overhead," says Glenn Dubin, the third member of the troika, a Washington Heights native who runs his own hedge fund, Highbridge Capital Management. "This way, we can tell donors that every dollar they give goes to support programs." Last year, the board kicked in $7.6 million, which includes staff salaries, rent, research, and the benefit's

Photographs: top left, David Allen/Corbis; bottom, Noah Sheldon.

million-dollar cost (catering, décor, Javits Center rental).

That kind of commitment was exactly what attracted billionaire George Soros, who, despite the hundreds of millions he's given abroad, had never backed a New York do-good institution to the tune of $4.5 million, which is what he pledged to Robin Hood three years ago—and he plans to give more. Soros was impressed by the foundation's results-oriented approach: "It's entrepreneurial. They find people with a sense of mission and help them build viable organizations." Drawing a stark contrast between Robin Hood and many other New York charities, Soros adds, "People generally want to feel good rather than do good. It's better if you're more concerned with the outcome than with the personal gratification of people sucking up to you."

One of the joys of starting your own club is that you get to pick the members. The original founders went through their Rolodexes to recruit flush and famous friends to the board. Jann Wenner, founder of *Rolling Stone* and chairman of Wenner Media, was drafted early on by Dubin. "The guerrilla nature of it was what appealed to me," says Wenner, who left the board several years ago. "They were young guys, and instead of funding Establishment things such as museums, they were going to find people having a hard time getting money, the outlaws, the heroes, the people who made a difference."

> "IT'S BETTER IF YOU'RE MORE CONCERNED WITH THE OUTCOME," SAYS GEORGE SOROS, "THAN WITH THE PERSONAL GRATIFICATION OF PEOPLE SUCKING UP TO YOU."

David Saltzman, who grew up in a prominent Upper East Side family, was also wooed by Dubin (who was briefly married to Saltzman's sister Elizabeth, *Vanity Fair*'s fashion director). Yes, it's definitely small-world time: Saltzman later helped recruit two school friends to the board, his Trinity classmate Dirk Ziff, heir to the Ziff-Davis publishing fortune, and Brown University pal Kennedy.

Robert Pittman, who invented MTV and is now the president of America Online, said Paul Jones didn't have to do much arm-twisting to get him to sign on. "I grew up in the civil-rights movement. Life's been good to me, and I felt somewhat disconnected," says Pittman, the son of a Mississippi Methodist minister. "I feel so darn lucky that I don't want to be a greedy pig."

Eager for real-world poverty expertise, the moneymen also made a point of including Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund; Maurice Chessa, director of the Bed-Stuy I Have a Dream Program; and later grantee Geoffrey Canada, president of Harlem's Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families. As Peter Kiernan puts it, "We didn't want to be a bunch of white guys from Wall Street telling people how things were going to be. Our board meetings are a riot. You have flaming liberals, ultraconservatives, every point of the religious and political spectrum."

FOUR TIMES A YEAR, THE BOARD schleps out to see programs, a hands-on way to emotionally connect to the people benefiting from its largesse. When you're as connected as these boldface board members, there's a macho pleasure in showing your stuff, in making things happen—a one-upmanship much on display at Robin Hood's April meeting, held at the offices of Binding Together, a printing company near the Lincoln Tunnel that counsels, trains, and employs former drug addicts and the homeless.

In a conference room at Binding Together, Harvey Weinstein and Diane Sawyer, new board members, both leaned forward intently as an account representative, a 37-year-old former prostitute who spent five years in prison for selling drugs, nervously described the physical agony of kicking heroin. "I was vomiting, I had diarrhea, I had stuff coming out everywhere," she said, breaking down in sobs. The room was utterly silent until Peter Kiernan called out softly, "You're among friends." She rallied with a tearful smile, giving a rousing endorsement to Binding Together, saying, "I didn't think I could do it. I just want to tell everyone how this school helped me."

Touring the noisy loftlike printing operations, where workers were running copiers and folding church flyers, board members seemed relieved to switch from raw feelings to CEO mode, peppering Vince Poppiti, the director of business services, with questions. Did he get a deal on the Xerox machines? (No.) How long is the new lease for? (Ten years.) Where are people getting jobs after training? (A bulletin board listed new employers.) Showing a small classroom, Poppiti explained, "We teach life skills here. Some people have never learned how to fill out a W-4." Weinstein, ever the class clown, joked that he could use help, saying, "I'll come by."

But the mood turned serious as Poppiti mentioned plans to add a second shift to expand the printing business and train more workers. "Would it help if we could refer you clients?" asked Dubin. Weinstein immediately jumped in—"Glenn just referred me"—promising to send some Miramax printing business over. Next, Dirk Ziff suggested that he and other board members use their contacts to get new copiers donated. Scribbling machine brand names on a notepad, Kiernan quickly conferred with Paul Jones: "Who should call [Xerox chairman] Paul Allaire?"

"They have the ability to make one phone call and accomplish something that would be impossible for anybody else," Sawyer said later. "What I love is it's not about sanctimony. It's genuine excitement about seeing something work."

After the board members filed back into the conference room for a confidential discussion, the staff of Binding Together stood in a hallway, looking stunned by this display of mogul clout. "To have these movers and shakers come here is an enormous opportunity," said Philip Caldarella, an ex-policeman who is the program's executive director. Added Ivan Braun, the development director, "Just to get funding officers from foundations to visit us is usually difficult, much less the board."

AS ROBIN HOOD AND ITS FOUNDERS mature into middle age, the "guerrilla" charity has become much tougher about passing out grants. Eighty-five percent of the programs it funded a decade ago have been dropped from the portfolio, as the sadder-but-wiser board and staff bailed out of organizations where money was mismanaged, activists burned out, projects tanked, or results were disappointing. In recent years, Robin Hood's list of grantees has become infinitely more stable (of the 98 programs funded in 1996, only 23 have since been dropped), as the foundation has become better able to assess the risk-reward ratio of new projects.

"We funded God knows how many organizations and clearly some of our past funding has not been successful," says Paul Tudor Jones, wincing as he recalls "the worst failure": financing a Harlem man running a drug hot line who turned out to have his own substance-abuse problems.

Robin Hood's staff makes frequent advice-and-inspection visits, but seven years ago the board took the unusual step of hiring an outside researcher to analyze grantees and issue regular report cards. Robin Hood's goal is to figure out which antipoverty programs are the most successful and why—what does it take to help kids raise their test scores, or enable an ex-addict to find and keep a job? "The board manages this charity as if it were a stock portfolio," says Susan Philliber, whose eponymous research firm evaluates grantees. Noting that Robin Hood boosts funding for good "investments" and performs workouts on disappointments, she adds, "If you're willing to learn and try to improve, they'll stay with you through bad outcomes."

Not all board members, however, have been enthusiastic about the revised, more pragmatic approach. Jann Wenner resigned from Robin Hood several years ago, partly out of disappointment that the place had changed direction. "There was always a tension between the commitment to do the odd, the outrageous, the less acceptable stuff," says Wenner, "or to pitch in with five other Establishment foundations and give money to this thing or that thing. My love is finding the weird thing to do. When things get too comfortable, I'm bored."

Wenner invented Robin Hood's annual December hero breakfast, which draws such influential invited guests as Rudy Giuliani, Tom Brokaw, and ABC News president David Westin. Last year, Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg gave a moving tribute about her brother's passion for Robin Hood, and the latest heroes—a principal who's worked wonders at a Bronx public school, a Queens social worker who counsels new moms to prevent child abuse, and a former crack dealer who's heading to law school thanks to Friends of Island Academy—told their inspiring stories. "I go to cry," says Pittman. "If you don't have a tear coming down your cheek, there's something wrong with you."

But here's the thing: Being anointed a star by Robin Hood, with the video camera rolling and journalists taking notes, is no guarantee of future funding. The board, while it may get out its hankies once a year, is not a sentimental group of people, and it's not embarrassed about turning off the spigot if the heroes turn out to be well-meaning but inept. As Kenneth Langone puts it, "I make a lot of investments that don't work out."

Rocky Robinson and Joe Perez were among Robin Hood's first heroes, honored for starting the Bedford-Stuyvesant Volunteer Ambulance Corporation, in response to the fact that it took forever to get ambulances to respond to 911 calls in their troubled neighborhood. Robin Hood staked the two to more than $300,000 over several years to buy an ambulance and train staff in CPR and other lifesaving techniques. But the foundation cut off their grant three years ago because of bad bookkeeping.

"We were friends," says Saltzman, sounding positively pained by the decision. "But we became concerned about their practices with money. They couldn't do the simplest bookkeeping. We offered to pay for an accountant, but it just never worked." Robinson, who freely admits that his bookkeeping has been "a horrible mess," says he's grateful that the foundation backed him for so long, but adds that the loss of funding has been devastating. "We feel very bad about it," he says, describing laying off staff and cutting back on ambulance calls. "Me and my partner are just barely keeping things going." Wenner regrets that Robin Hood gave up on them. "I spent an incredible amount of time fighting for Rocky and Joe," he says. "The fact they can't observe middle-class business strictures goes along with the territory."

The fate of another "hero," Willie Battle, hung in the balance at the recent board meeting at Binding Together. This magnetic 44-year-old ex-junkie, who now calls himself Brother Battle, started snorting heroin at age 12 and spent four years in prison on drug-dealing charges. He was honored just three years ago by Robin Hood for creating an after-school program in East New York called Imani Altisimo Inc. But since then he has overextended, adding a basketball league, a fitness-training program, conflict-resolution classes, and more, to the point that the entire enterprise has become financially shaky. "He grew too fast and lost his original mission with the kids," says Lisa Smith, Robin Hood's deputy director. "He's not retaining the kids." Battle sounded morose on the phone a few days before the board's meeting. "Robin Hood has been our major funder," said Battle.

BILL POWER From left, Robin Hood's deputy director Lisa Smith, board member Geoffrey Canada, founder Glenn Dubin, President Clinton, board chairman Peter Kiernan, founder Paul Jones, and executive director David Saltzman at the White House, June 1996.

"We're broke. If they pull out, then our program collapses."

The closed-room board discussion got hot and heavy as members debated whether this program could be saved. "They really went at it," Saltzman reported later. "Nobody wants to throw good money after bad. But we didn't want to just let the kids go into the abyss." The compromise solution: a brief reprieve for Battle, with the board providing a three-month $60,000 grant and instructions to prepare to merge with another neighborhood-kids' program or radically cut operations. He was immensely relieved to get a second chance. "I appreciate their extending their hand to us one more time," said Battle. "I'm glad they didn't walk away."

Perhaps it's not surprising that there has occasionally been a culture gap between Robin Hood's middle-class staff and the people they're trying to help. En route to visit a job-training program in Sunset Park run by a nun, Saltzman tells me, with a wry smile, that Sister Mary Franciscus threw out the first Robin Hood program officer who came to check out the program seven years ago. The problem: The woman's stylish but provocative clothes sent the wrong message to the young adults, many of them school dropouts from welfare families, about appropriate attire in corporate America. "I thought what Sister Mary did was great," Saltzman says, adding that the chastened staffer made a return trip in more conservative garb. "But it was gutsy, since we were there trying to decide whether to give her money."

> "THERE'S SOMETHING IN THIS FOR YOU," SAYS STAN DRUCKENMILLER, "WHETHER YOU'RE A BLEEDING-HEART LIBERAL LIKE PAUL JONES OR A COLDHEARTED CONSERVATIVE LIKE MYSELF."

Sister Mary, a tall, wisecracking woman in a blue habit, teases the students as she sticks her head into classrooms in the airy converted-Catholic-school gymnasium, where African-American and Hispanic teenagers are studying for their GEDs, rehearsing for job interviews, and learning word processing. "Aren't you supposed to be wearing glasses?" she calls out to a girl squinting at a computer. In the hallway, Sister Mary whispers, "I memorize everyone's name. Most of them have never had much personal attention before—and if they did, it was the wrong kind."

Saltzman has come by today to discuss the possibility of expanding this successful program, called Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, to another site. Robin Hood is only one of twenty funders of the job effort, kicking in $250,000 of the $1.6 million budget. (A rival foundation official grumbles, off the record, that Robin Hood is often a little too eager to grab credit for good works.) But to give Robin Hood's merry band their due, they've often been the first to contribute vital start-up cash to get new projects rolling, as well as take the unusual step of arranging for top-notch (and free) legal, accounting, and management advice. "I don't think we'd be around without Robin Hood," says Sister Mary, noting that the foundation came to her financial rescue after a government-funding cut several years ago, as well as helping to organize its bookkeeping. "Robin Hood is like a mentor: They give us goals. They push us to think about how we can do better."

Meanwhile, up in Harlem on West 116th Street on a Wednesday afternoon, people are lined up around the block waiting for free oxtail stew at the newly renovated Community Kitchen, which looks more like a cozy restaurant than it does a soup kitchen. The entire gut rehab was courtesy of Robin Hood's Lonni Tanner, whose full-time job consists of badgering companies for donations of everything from books and computers to architectural plans and free electrical work; as she puts it, "I only deal in free." Kathy Goldman, the executive director of the Community Food Resource Center, says, "Lonni got us almost everything—every tile on the floor, every pot and pan, every chair, even the copper pipes that you can't see."

It's easy to measure the success of a soup kitchen by simply looking at costs and counting up the number of people who get fed every week. But trying to change people's behavior—say, to stop teenage girls from getting pregnant—is an infinitely more complicated endeavor. Dr. Michael Carrera, director of the Children's Aid Society' s National Adolescent Sexuality Training Center, received his first $150,000 Robin Hood grant in 1991. The foundation is now backing Carrera to the tune of $700,000, in part to run a controlled three-year study with 600 New York City teens. The goal: To see whether intensive tutoring, sex education, and counseling can keep the kids on the straight and narrow. "The trader mentality is not to take positions for a long time," says Carrera, "so it's good to be supported in this way."

WHILE THIS WEEK'S STAR-STUDDED celebration represents a social and financial milestone for the Robin Hood Foundation—and it certainly raises its glamour quotient to new heights—in some fundamental way the spirit of the core group hasn't changed all that much since the days of those early, clubbier board meetings. Because they all see New York City as a laboratory for social change, this opinionated group, a mixture of Democrats and Republicans, still thrives on arguing and debating over how best to tackle poverty on a block-by-block basis. The only difference between now and then, Jones and his crew would argue, is that the checks they disperse are a lot bigger.

Brushing off the inevitable failures, they take enormous pleasure in the successes. At the foundation's most recent Tavern on the Green breakfast honoring its "hero" community activists, Stan Druckenmiller presented an award to Friends of Island Academy, the group that helps young Rikers Island ex-inmates get educations and jobs. It was the first big Robin Hood event since John F. Kennedy Jr.'s death (the breakfast was renamed in his honor), and the normally low-key trader got downright emotional as he praised the program for dramatically reducing prison recidivism rates, making New York safer, and saving tax dollars—as well as changing lives for the better. "I don't care whether you're a bleeding-heart liberal like Paul Jones or a coldhearted conservative like myself," Druckenmiller said, bringing a knowing laugh from an audience filled with friends and colleagues. "There's something in this for you." ■

HONEY, I WIRED THE KIDS

In our digital household—which has the computing power of a small company—the kids fight for cell-phone privileges, AOL accounts, and computer upgrades. Thank God my wife is chief information officer. By Michael Wolff

WE HAVE, IN OUR house, among two working parents, two teens, and an 8-year-old, five computers (both Mac and Windows machines in various stages of obsolescence), four cell phones, seven phone lines, two Palm Pilots, one DSL, two ISP connections, a collection of personal domain names, a CD burner, a scanner, and, subject to much contention, one AOL account.

We function, in other words, near the technology level of an average work group in an information-related business. With various careers at home, different levels of schoolwork, the routing of various social and business contacts, and constant clerical and accounting functions, we do pretty much the same things that a work group does.

But a key difference between us and the work group is that the work group has the support of a variety of systems people, and we do not.

My wife, Alison, is a lawyer, and for a long time I wondered how couples got along in the world without at least one spouse's being able to represent the family in business, administrative, tax, and real-estate matters, not to mention disputes with contractors. But my wife is also a technically adroit person (the most technically adroit in our house), and that seems to me now, modern-world-wise, an even more important skill.

How does a family function without its own chief information officer?

Not a week passes without substantial purchasing decisions' having to be made, involving issues of functionality, cost, and supplier.

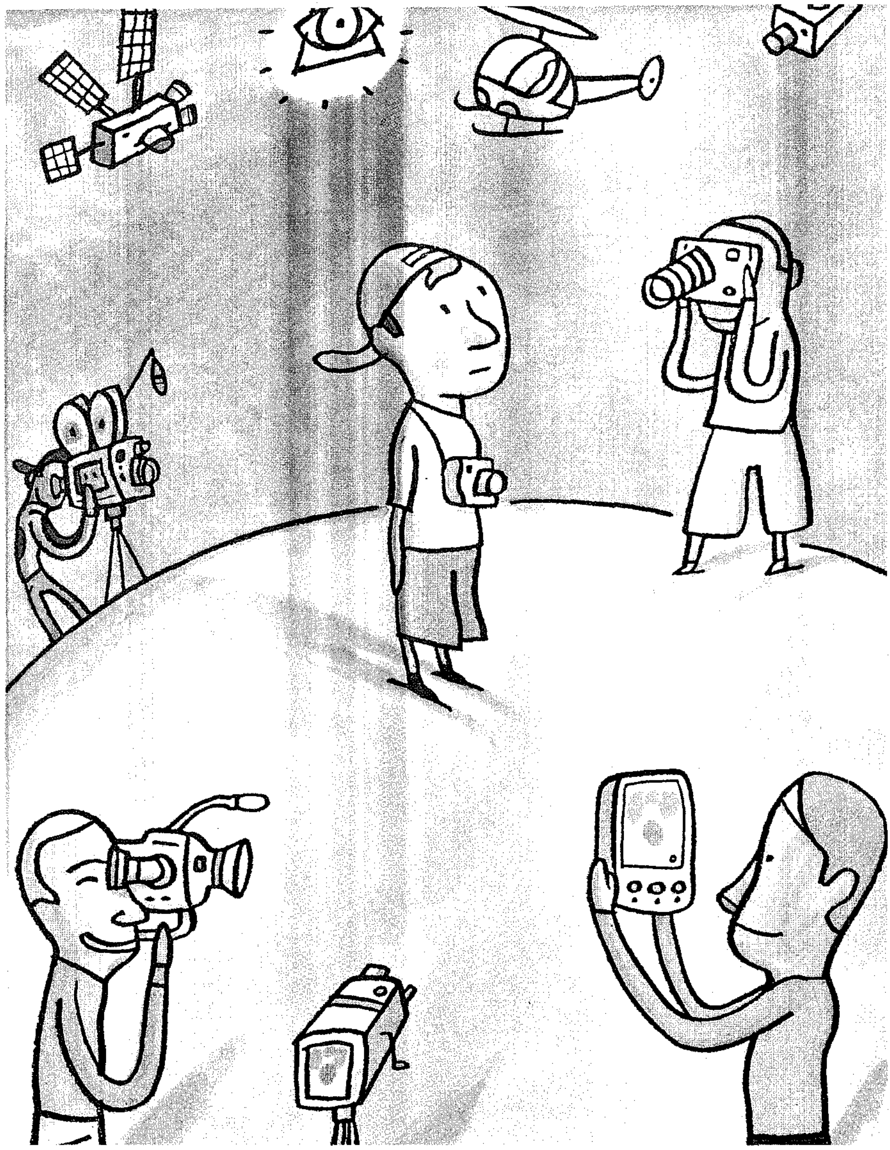
Not a day passes without maintenance and support obligations, if not outright crises, from hard-drive crashes and data-recovery efforts to Coke in keyboards to Mac-Windows incompatibilities to remote-server breakdowns to local-network failures to the problems of having to print large color documents for school projects (late at night, Alison will take this job to Kinko's). When the DSL service was being installed (a multi-month process) and a technician called from the switching station saying, "Lemme speak to who's handling your telecommunications there," I handed Alison the phone.

And not a moment goes by when we are not altogether dependent on the systems she has put in place—the networking, the jury-rigging, the vendor relationships. ("Who is responsible for this?" my older daughter screeches.)

Of course, like almost all technologically equipped and enabled people, we (the end users in our house) think of ourselves as technologically deprived. We are most conscious of, and most frustrated by, what we don't have.

We don't have a high-quality color printer; we don't have a high-performance copy machine (you have to make copies through the fax); we don't have a wireless network; we don't have a voice-mail system with individual voice mail-

Illustrations by Pascal Lemaitre



“TECHNOLOGY FOCUSES F

MIGHT SAY, ‘HOW DID YOU FEE

boxes; we don’t have whatever game it is that anyone wants; we don’t even have multiple AOL accounts (while AOL offers multiple screen names, only one screen name can be used at a time).

And there are some of us who have lesser machines than others.

Alison is held almost entirely responsible for not only what doesn’t work but what we don’t have.

“Well, are we ever going to get it?” my middle daughter asks, with infinite resignation.

“It's so unfair,” says my 8-year-old son.

Is there a correlation between a traditional motherhood role and this new job of family CIO?

There is really a lot about maintaining a technology system that has similarities to sewing and washing and ironing and satisfying all the old domestic needs. It can be as thankless and frustrating (try holding on a help line). And certainly it’s true that like traditional homemaking, the job of family information maintenance is never done. There might not be anything in our domestic lives that touches us so immediately and hotly as our technology (losing e-mail or network access is as paralyzing as having no phone—“Why not just resign from the human race?” as the older daughter puts it).

It is not just my wife’s technical skill (or patience) that has put her into what, I seem to be arguing, is a new kind of fifties-mom-in-digital-clothing paradigm. Along with the mechanical stuff, there is a kind of Zen thing—or maternal twist, if you will—you have to apply to technology, which is to understand that no one individual is ever going to be happy; rather, your job is to keep the system itself happy. In other words, this isn’t, anymore, a traditional kind of man’s thing, an equipment thing, a gizmo thing, a gee-whiz thing, but, in the network world, a connectedness, a nurturing, emotionally fraught whole-family issue.

Possibly, anyway.

OBVIOUSLY, WE SPEND TIME WORRYING about the adverse effects of technology on our children, but not, I admit, all that much. We tend to find that parents who do spend a lot of time worrying about these issues don’t have a lot of technology (when you have it, most of all you just want it to do everything it’s supposed to do). Still, I often think I would like to resist more than I seem able to do. (I am more protective and judgmental than my wife, who is more inclined to trust both the children and the technology.)

Cell phones, for instance, an unexpectedly contentious technology, started to appear in my now tenth-grade daughter’s circle in the seventh grade. They were, I thought, vulgarisms: just fashion and status accoutrements. (I felt about seventh-graders with cell phones the way I feel about seventh-graders with Prada.) The fallback position, a beeper, seemed worse, and, with its gang and drug connotations, even dangerous.

“You know you’re overreacting,” said my wife.

My issues, I understood, had nothing to do with the phone itself, with the technology or the functionality. They had to do with—well, not giving your kid everything your kid wants.

But then there is the push-down effect.

First, my daughter borrowed her mother’s beeper, then one of our cell phones, which after the third or fourth time was not returned right away, so that a de facto state of having a beeper or cell phone came to exist, at the price of inconveniencing one or another parent.

So finally, in the process of upgrading our cell phones (because the old cell phones don’t work very well in Manhattan), the old one is passed down from parent to teenager. But the old phone that didn’t work for the parent (although somehow the parent used it for the last eighteen months, and used an even worse one before that) doesn’t work for the teenager. Finally, it’s not even the teenager who complains but the parent who is suddenly cursing the obsolete technology while trying to get the teenager on the phone. Anyway, the failure to deliver something less than immediate gratification results in the teenager’s shortly being upgraded. At which point the issue is no longer a matter of what the cell phone means, implies, suggests, portends, but what it means, implies, suggests, portends when the teenager is not available via the cell phone.

"If you don't keep that phone on at all times," I say, often, "you can't have a phone." (Answer: "Whatever.")

This is partly an issue of technologically facilitated control and supervision and convenience, but it is also a more basic issue of modern telecommunications. That is, you must have a person to talk to when you want to talk to him or her. What's more, it's a passing-the-time issue, something extra to do with an idle moment. When I am sitting in a restaurant waiting for a lunch companion, or in traffic in a cab, if I am lucky, my daughter will be willing, available, and within the service area to talk to me.

Indeed, I look forward to all new ways of being in greater and greater touch with the people I want to talk to (which is a different issue from being in closer touch with people with whom one would rather not be in touch).

IN THE FUTURE, THERAPISTS MIGHT SAY, "How did you feel about your family's technology?"

Certainly technology has become the focus of some central family issues: money and sex, for starters.

After all, technology can be as expensive as a car.

There are families, of course, who deprive themselves, and families who go way overboard, families whose self-worth may be compromised by obsolete equipment, and families whose values may be corrupted by who-knows-what unnecessary electronic status symbols.

ILY ISSUES. IN THE FUTURE, THERAPISTS

BOUT YOUR FAMILY'S TECHNOLOGY?' "

Who gets what and how is the issue with all things in all families. In the past, teenagers fought over the bathroom and phone and television; now they fight over the AOL account (apparently, attentive to domestic discord and to the power of teen chat, AOL is about to release a version that will accommodate multiple users).

And then there is the sex issue. You can't have a discussion about the Internet with parents of teens without this specter's rising (indeed, you can't have a discussion with parents of teens about anything without this specter's rising).

I spoke to a mother recently who has decided her daughter won't be given Internet access until she is 14 (like pierced ears).

Of course, there are all these filtering applications, used policelike in schools and libraries, which work poorly and cynically, but which no parent (other than ones who are both sex-obsessed and technically proficient) would actually install.

In our house, we have decided (although I can't say that Alison and I have really hammered out our digital-sex policy) that the world of digital media, instead of being a city of mean streets ready to rob our children's innocence, is like a great, varied bookstore, which I suppose can take innocence, too, but not too roughly.

We do not actually want to know.

When you have no choice, it is better to find a positive outlook.

THE ISSUES OF WHAT YOU DO IN YOUR FAMIly versus how you find it done in the outside world is almost always an awkward one. Now it's an issue of technology too.

If you are from an under-wired family, you probably feel pretty bad (we know parents who have had to call consultants to install AOL). On the other hand, getting all this stuff up and running, being transformed by it in ways large and small, you expect the world to be up and running and transformed, too.

Striving, however, does not always pay off.

Having, for instance, chosen an academically superior school for our children, we find that technology is looked down upon.

"The kids tell *us* about computers," said a fifth-grade teacher with remarkably deft condescension during one parent-teacher conference I endured not long ago.

My middle-school daughter has recently come home to report that every time she goes back to an interesting kid site or game site at a school computer, a blocking sign appears, saying DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

I suppose the face-off here is a natural one between technology and pedagogy, but the snobbery is clear too. Technology is an arriviste thing (which is true).

Gallingly, we recently endured the great e-mail ban in our academically superior school.

The ban, which was instituted this winter, made it an offense to send or receive personal e-mail from a school computer. Now, this directly impacted on our household, because my older daughter passes a particular cheese store on her way home from school, which means that if I e-mail her in time with my preferences, she'll pick my choice of Italian/French/Spanish cow/goat/sheep on her walk home.

I was going to write a letter. ("If you even think of it . . . !" my daughter threatened, heading me off.)

The solution, of course, is merely to upgrade our handheld devices to wireless network status, which I suppose also has the benefit of offering a lesson to my children in how technology subverts authority. Ha!

CERTAINLY WE SPEND TOO MUCH time thinking about our technology. Possibly, we spend as much time in our house on the rituals, protocols, procedures, and complexities of digital media and communications as families in another era might have spent on religious dogma and training.

But our children are blasé. They are post-nerd kids (assimilated). These are un-meaningful appliances for them. Just a bridge to somewhere.

Indeed, I find the highest order of technological accomplishment to be my teenagers' bedrooms. In fact, there is some kind of developmental progression you can watch in which, over a few years' time, the technology comes together in a smoothly running universe of totally maximized communication and information access (among the dirty clothes, papers, food).

I know few offices or news outlets or international monitoring groups as in touch with the world as my 16-year-old daughter's room.

This isn't specialized geekdom, either; this is just an up-to-the-minute media universe.

There converge in my daughter's room (and it is a very small room) multiple copper land lines, high-speed broadband connectivity, cable access, and wireless cell and PDA reception. From the Web, from anyone she has ever known who is sending her e-mail, from mobile teen callers to AOL IMers to Katie Couric to whatever Napster is scarfing down for later listening amusement to various English-class texts she is downloading for searchability, portability, and other use, it all ends up here.

It *is* cool.

At least it is when you have a mother to get it working for you. ■

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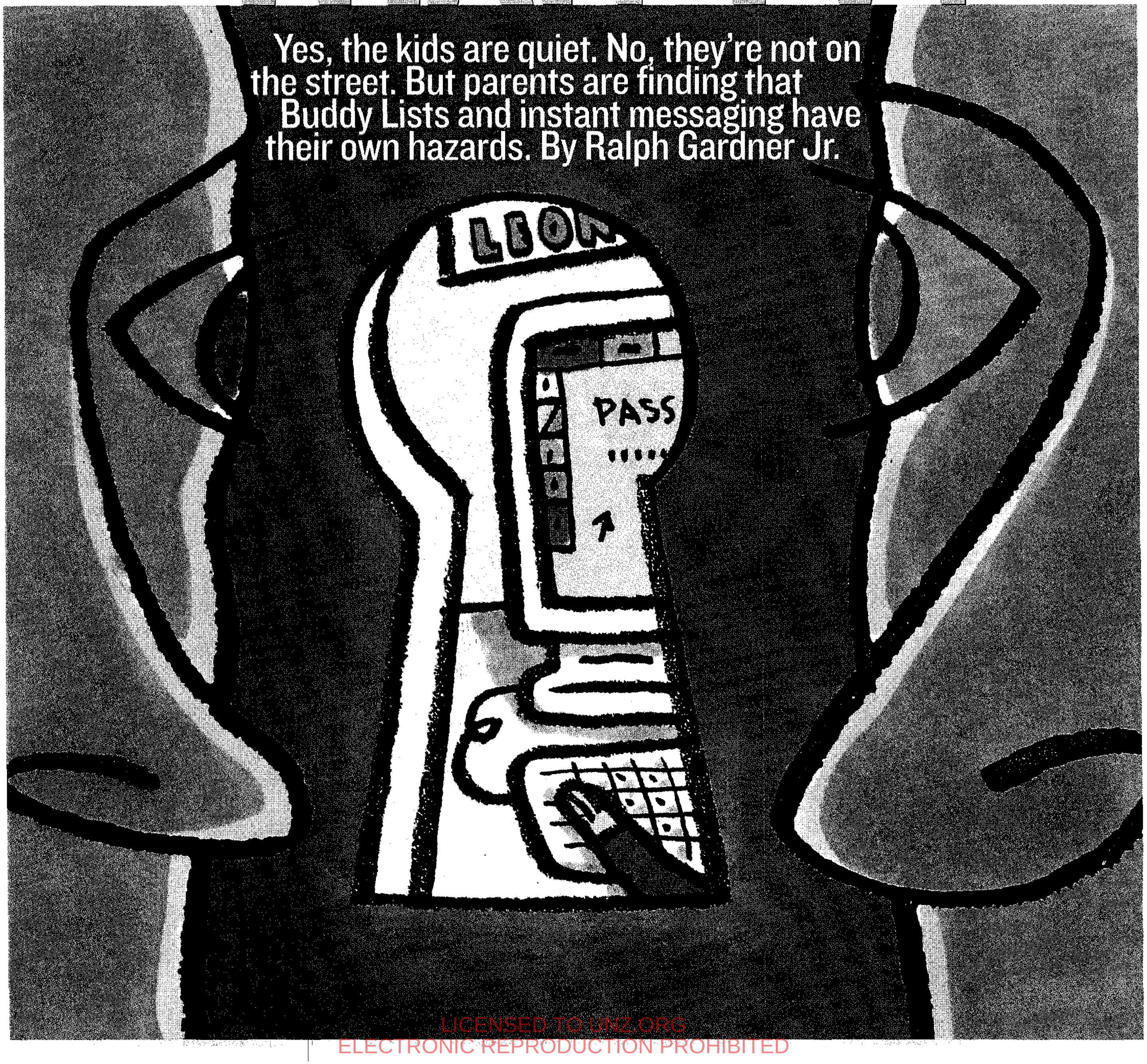
IS AOL WORSE THAN TV?



Yes, the kids are quiet. No, they're not on the street. But parents are finding that Buddy Lists and instant messaging have their own hazards. By Ralph Gardner Jr.

A SOUND SOMETHING LIKE chimes emanated from my computer recently, a screen within the screen popped up, and I suddenly found myself conversing with one of my daughter's 11-year-old classmates, home sick from school.

"Hi how r u?" she asked in age-appropriate computer jive.

"Fine," I typed back, perhaps a bit impatiently.

"Is this Lucy?" she demanded.

"No, this is Lucy's father."

"Oops. Sorry!" and she was gone.

As innocuous as our exchange had been, it suggested a disturbing new truth: We no longer live alone. My wife and I and our two—I like to think—reasonably well-bred daughters have been joined by a supporting cast of dozens who have access to our home whenever the computer is turned on, thanks to such technological marvels as instant messaging and Buddy Lists.

Admittedly, they don't show up in person, but their presence is nonetheless pervasive—especially, it seems, while my oldest daughter is in the middle of her homework. There she is doing research on, say, the American Revolution when one classmate comes online, then another, to discuss not the Stamp Act but the latest tank top on sale at dELia*s.

> **"THE COMPUTER SCREEN CAUGHT US UNAWARE—WE FAILED TO SET LIMITS."**

My daughter tried to reassure me, unsuccessfully, when I brought the Buddy List's mischievous potential to her attention. "A lot of people, if they want to go on the Internet and do work by themselves, they'll have a second or third screen name and they just won't tell anyone about it so no one will IM them," she explained confidently, using shorthand for instant messaging. "I usually go on using *your* screen name for stuff like that."

For those who remain in the technological wilderness, a Buddy List is a list of friends whose presence online is noted in a small box in a corner of the screen. Instant messaging allows Buddy List members to type messages back and forth to each other in something approaching real time.

The danger of Buddy Lists and instant messaging isn't only that they interfere with homework. It turns out that they're an unparalleled medium for creating interpersonal conflict, as well as disseminating gossip, rumors, and in some cases even death threats against other children.

"People can take things the wrong way, because it's hard to show your emotions online," explains Zoe Zimet, a sixth-grader at the Village Community School. "I was joking with my friend"—calling her a "sykick," an inside joke that apparently denotes unpopularity. "She thought I was serious, and she got mad at me."

"On AOL, one of the big topics is who you like," explains Alison, a sixth-grader who attends public school in Bronxville. For example, a close friend might inquire about how deeply you feel about some boy in the class, then forward that confidential information to everybody on her Buddy List. "And I answer them and if they tell someone else, they can instant-message you, 'I heard you like . . .'

"You say, 'Who told you that?' And then a whole fight breaks out between three different people."

One school's eighth-grade Parents in Action meeting was recently roiled by rumors that had spread across the Internet. "There had been very defamatory gossip about something that went down between boys and girls—who had been with who or went somewhere with someone," said Victoria Goldman, the co-author with Catherine Hausman of *The Manhattan Family Guide to Private Schools* and a parent at the school where the incident occurred. "There had been profanities, slurs, and horrific gossip without even a shred of truth. It was a gradewide social issue, and actually it's a schoolwide social issue."

Thus far, much of the concern about children's using the Internet has centered on their easy access to pornographic Websites and the possibility of encounters with pedophiles in public chat rooms. But there's another, more subtle and more profound way in which the technology has infiltrated our children's lives: It allows them to travel daily, or more often nightly—after they've finished their homework, if we're lucky—to a world where parental supervision is almost impossible and where a *Lord of the Flies* ethic rules.

"You used to be able to say, 'No phone calls until you finish your homework,' " one mother said. "Now if she's on her computer, you don't know what she's doing."

It's ironic in a way. A generation that prided itself on turning parenting into an art form and choreographing every aspect of its children's happiness—starting with mothers' groups, continuing through play dates and the right schools—seems to have been blindsided by this latest twist. Never before, to my knowledge, has the world faced a technology where the average third-grader is more proficient than the average CEO, not that that's saying a lot. One dad told me with a mixture of alarm and pride about the way his 10-year-old daughter managed to jimmy the parental controls he'd placed on the family computer.

"Somewhere along the line she figured out what my password was," he said. "So she was able to go on and take off the restrictions on her account, and also change her password so that I can't get into her account and find out what she's doing."

To keep up in this escalating cold war, parents are using every underhanded espionage tactic at their disposal. One man I know received a somewhat plaintive call from the mother of a friend of his daughter's, asking if he happened to know her daughter's AOL password.

"We were protecting ourselves against the television screen, but the computer screen caught us unawares," observes Ellen Freudenheim, the mother of two computer experts—one 15, the other 12. "Because of our desire for them to stay ahead of a fast-moving technology that will define their lives, we basically failed to set limits."

One mother recalls a recent play date where her son and the daughter of a friend spent the entire afternoon on the girl's computer—to her mother's consternation. "She actually begged them to watch TV instead," the boy's mother said.

BUDDY LISTS HAVE BECOME A NEW ARENA FOR competition and a symbol of social status. Those with the most names are considered the coolest. I asked my daughter how many names were on her Buddy List, expecting her to say four or five.

"I have the smallest Buddy List in my class," she said mournfully. "I only have 33 people."

Illustrations by Pascal Lemaitre

To prove it, she went online and asked one of the more precocious kids in her class—“She lives online,” my daughter explained—how many names she had on her list.

“Ninety-three,” came the reply. “G2G. Bye.” G2G means “got to go.”

“See?” my daughter said triumphantly.

Kids pad their lists with all their classmates, their friends’ friends, and everyone they know from summer camp. Zoe Zimet has 98, and Alison is maxed out at 97. “I had to take some off,” she confides, having decided to jettison some of her younger sister’s buddies, whom she’d used to pad her list when she first went online. “In the beginning, everybody had a lot of buddies and I didn’t because I’d just gotten it,” she explained.

IN THIS SORT OF ENVIRONMENT, LEAVING someone off your Buddy List is a stinging rebuke. “You’re friends with somebody since the first day of nursery school, and they leave your name off purposely to hurt your feelings,” says a mother whose daughter apparently suffered that fate. “There’s all these cliques and formations in the classroom, and this is another tactic to put it to each other. It’s mean, it’s sadistic, and this stuff doesn’t get talked about at parents’ meetings because no parent will own up to their child being mean.”

When I asked my daughter whether she or her friends ever indulged in such exclusionary behavior or spread malicious gossip about others, she denied it. However, her explanation for her moral rectitude provided small cause for comfort. “We don’t like typing full sentences,” she explained without evident irony.

DANIEL SMITH, A HANDSOME, SOFT-SPOKEN sixth-grader at an Upper East Side private school, spends all evening, every evening, on his computer. “The second I finish my homework, I come online until I go to bed,” he said as he sat before his screen while names popped on and off his Buddy List, signifying friends’ coming online or leaving cyberspace, as swiftly as numbers on the NASDAQ. “Homework doesn’t take me that long, so that would be like five hours.”

Daniel’s mother denies that he spends that much time online. “It may be three hours,” she said, acknowledging that even that is too much. “I’m not going to make a big deal of it until he goes to camp. After he goes through detox by being away, next year there will be hard-and-fast rules.”

On a recent evening, Daniel and a classmate were discussing Rachel, Daniel’s new girlfriend, who’d just signed off. “I hate her,” the friend volunteered. “No you don’t,” Daniel typed back, sounding wounded, even in the affect-free dialogue of cyberspace.

The friend seemed to be jumping to conclusions. He’d never met Rachel—in real life. But then again, neither has Daniel. If there’s one thing for which cyberspace seems ideally suited, even among tweens, it is its ability to spark romance.

Daniel had made Rachel’s acquaintance two weeks before while playing Sudika Sabre, a text-based Internet fantasy game created by a 15-year-old computer prodigy and friend of Daniel’s that thoughtfully allows combatants to lower their weapons long enough to exchange pleasantries.

“We get along really well,” Daniel explained earnestly, adding that he’d already told Rachel he loved her and that she’d reciprocated his feelings.

“It’s easier to express yourself online,” he added. “When you say it face-to-face, your stomach starts to grumble.”

It’s unlikely Daniel and Rachel will ever consummate their relationship, even with a kiss, since the 13-year-old lives in South Carolina. However, that doesn’t appear to have dampened Daniel’s ardor for a girl who describes herself as five feet six with green eyes and blonde hair and already appears to have mastered the art of wrapping young men around her little finger.

Daniel scrolled back to Rachel’s conversation before she signed off.

“Don’t tell her I said this,” Rachel said, referring to a South Carolina girlfriend as if Daniel, sitting in his Greenwich Village apartment, might run into her in their school cafeteria, “but she’s always trying to take someone away from me. Like when I was going out with this boy here she’d always talk to him and tell him she loved him and that she wanted to go with him.”

“I DON’T LET THEM GO ON TH

THE FIRST AMENDMENT IS OVE

Daniel has never seen Rachel’s picture. “She hasn’t got one online yet,” he explained. Neither does he. His family bought him a scanner, but they haven’t figured out how to install it.

Daniel’s mother says her son chastised her when she innocently suggested they exchange pictures through the U.S. Postal Service: “He said, ‘Mom, she’s not going to give me her address.’ ”

OFTEN, THE FIRST AND ONLY INDICATION THAT his child has committed some sin online—not of the flesh but a violation of AOL’s code of conduct—is when a parent attempts to go online himself and finds that his service has been suspended. “So you call a number and they tell you the reason,” explains a mother whose daughter was a serial offender—in the third grade. “She sent a bunch of e-mails—like four or five hundred—within a short period of time. I don’t think she knew what she was doing, but it caught their attention.”

This wasn’t the family’s first run-in with the AOL cops. “She did, at one point prior to this,” the mother says, choosing her words carefully, “have a situation where she told somebody—not to go fuck themselves, but she said something to somebody on the Internet, and we again got our service suspended.”

AOL finds out not because it eavesdrops on children’s conversations but because kids turn each other in. If love and romance is one side of the Buddy List, then retribution is the other. “You know, when we were young, if there were kids we didn’t like, we drew terrible pictures,” says Parry Aftab, author of *The Parent’s Guide to Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace*. “The kids notify AOL all the time to turn in kids that they don’t like. It’s their new tool to get other kids back.”

In one recent case, a sixth-grader received threatening e-mails on her home computer. “It said, ‘I’m going to get you, I’m going to kidnap you, I’m going to torture you,’ ” says a parent who knows the family.

Law-enforcement authorities were supposedly called and a search was conducted for the culprit. As it turned out, the letters were sent by a classmate. “At the end of it, the kid was reprimanded,” says the friend of the family. “The offending family didn’t even take it seriously—‘Oh, please, *that?* It’s just a practical joke.’ ”

Part of the problem is that different families have different attitudes toward their children’s use of the Internet and how much oversight is too much to exercise online. In the old days—which means maybe two years ago—parents could at least draw some comfort from the knowledge that whatever weird behavior and warped values our children were exposed to during the day at school, we had several solid hours to deprogram them. Home, for all its problems, remained a relative oasis of right-headedness. But with the ascendance of the Buddy List, it’s as if my kid’s entire fifth-grade class—some of whose parents are strict, not even allowing their children to have their own screen names or use the Internet when they’re not in the room, whereas other parents exercise no oversight—has moved into our apartment. Life has become one big sleepover.

Some parents rigorously regulate when their children can use the Internet. “I don’t

NTERNET WITHOUT ME IN THE ROOM—

ULED BY PARENTAL PRIVILEGE.”

let them go on the Internet without me in the room,” one mother says flatly. “No chat rooms. She isn’t allowed to have her own password. She isn’t allowed to open mail from screen names she doesn’t know. She isn’t allowed to pester people with those stupid chain letters. I periodically do check her sent and old mail to see if she recognizes all the screen names. I explained to both my kids that the First Amendment is overruled by parental privilege.”

Other parents feel that to read their children’s e-mail is equivalent to reading their diaries, an invasion of privacy—though they may do it anyway. One mother says she was astonished at a recent parents’ meeting at her daughter’s school when another mother stated proudly that she read all her child’s e-mails. “It was accepted as if it made perfect sense,” the mother reports. “I thought it was appalling. Parents are in their children’s lives too much. If you can’t write a goddamned letter to a friend, what’s happening to the world?”

At the Parents in Action meeting, where the malicious gossip was discussed, some of the parents were all for shutting down their kids’ access to the Internet—with the exception, of course, of letting them do school-related research on their computers. “But there’s rebellion,” says Victoria Goldman, the mother who attended the meeting. “The kids don’t like a limit. How much is a kid going to like a curfew? And there were parents in the room who felt like they didn’t have to do that. And there were yet other parents in the room who felt this was a complete bullshit nonissue.”

BACK AT DANIEL’S, A NEW NAME POPS UP ON the sixth-grader’s Buddy List—Flirtatious. Daniel explains that she’s the girlfriend of D.D., a popular boy in his class, who also happens to be online. “I know when they’re both on, because they won’t even answer me,” Daniel says glumly.

“Watch,” Daniel says, instant-messaging a question to Flirtatious, who apparently comes by her name honestly.

“Please leave me alone for fifteen minutes,” she replies.

After D.D. and Flirtatious’s online assignation, D.D. condescends to answer a few questions about his love life. (Unless the three of them go into a private chat room, Flirtatious doesn’t know what D.D.’s telling Daniel.) Daniel calculates that D.D. picks up as many as seven screen names at the average inter-school dance. But D.D., whose modesty is apparently part of his appeal, says the number is closer to two names on a typical evening and that girls are much freer about giving out their screen names than their phone numbers.

Boys, it seems, come off better in cyberspace than they do in person, pip-squeak Cyrano de Bergeracs. “Juliet said to me, ‘Oliver is a really, really interesting person online,’ ” one mother says, referring to a male friend of her third-grade daughter. “She said he was a jerk in real life, but online he was really nice. I thought it was interesting that kids they know have different personalities online.”

Alison reports she has received instant-messaging declarations of love. But it’s not the same thing as having a boy tell you he loves you in person. “It’s a bigger deal,” she says. “It’s actually harder to say it.”

When that sad day comes to break up with your paramour, the Internet would also seem to be the perfect vehicle. One mother remembers looking over her son’s shoulder when he received an incoming missile from a girl with whom he’d just broken up online. “You’re fat and your friends are ugly,” she wrote, dispatching him and his Buddy List in one fell swoop.

Always the gentleman, however, D.D. says he always breaks up with his women in person. “It’s more professional,” he says.

A FEW MONTHS AGO, MY WIFE INSISTED ON putting our computer in the living room, instead of in my daughter’s bedroom where she wanted it. At the time, I thought she was overreacting. I no longer do. And I’m not alone. While my evidence is anecdotal, it seems that PCs, laptops, and iMacs are migrating back to family rooms such as the kitchen, where parents can look over their children’s shoulders, literally, as they navigate cyberspace.

My daughter, of course, is angry about our decision. She’s aware of the dangers of the online world. For instance, she doesn’t go into chat rooms. “They can get your screen name and IM you,” she says. But she also feels that I’ve violated her rights by stealing her computer. “When I got it for Christmas,” she said huffily, “it said on the tag FROM SANTA TO LUCY.”

I sympathize with her—but not enough to give it back. ▬

RED DIAPER BRIGADE

They were adopted from orphanages in the Chinese countryside. The challenge for their parents is to bring these girls up as New Yorkers while keeping them in touch with their former culture. By Steve Fishman

IN THE HOTEL ROOM IN SOUTHERN China, the orphanage director pointed in the direction of Roberta Ferdschneider, a curly-haired woman who sat on a bed, hands folded patiently in her lap. She smiled what she thought was her most welcoming smile as the director, a sweet man, introduced her to his 2-year-old charge, Wu Pei Yue. "Mama!" he said, pointing. "Mama!"

It was the middle of winter. Wu Pei Yue had been driven a couple of hours in from the countryside wearing four pairs of pants, two shirts, two sweaters, a knit jacket, a hat with cat ears—every stitch of clothing she owned. She had red, chapped cheeks; fine, poorly cropped hair; and a face distorted by screams.

Roberta had begun the adoption process eighteen months before, and six weeks ago, the FedEx man had brought to her office a one-inch-by-one-inch photo of the future Juliette Ferdschneider. Roberta, single and almost 50, had converted the guest room in her Brooklyn apartment to a child's room—she'd had the ceiling wallpapered to look like a blue sky with clouds. She'd read up on attachment theory.

There was also lots of maternal gear to get. She bought a lightweight stroller at Toys 'R' Us, the one on Union Square—it was packed on the plane with the bottles and diapers (in a couple of different sizes, since she didn't really know how big her baby would be). She was bringing pink-purple shoes in two sizes, a polarfleece coat, pajamas. She'd packed a medical kit with syringes and antibiotics. She was prepared for all the exigencies, she'd told herself—except one. Her daughter-to-be, Wu Pei Yue, a name Roberta couldn't pronounce, broke into sobs at the sight of her. "Juliette"—as Roberta called her child from the start—"wanted no part of me," Roberta quickly surmised.

After all this time, Roberta was a little heartbroken. And yet in some unexplainable way, Roberta found she loved her fitful daughter-to-be at first sight. "I knew in my heart of hearts her tears were a good thing," said Roberta. "I was having the big gain, she the big loss." She set out to win over this angry child. Communicate, she told herself, however she could.

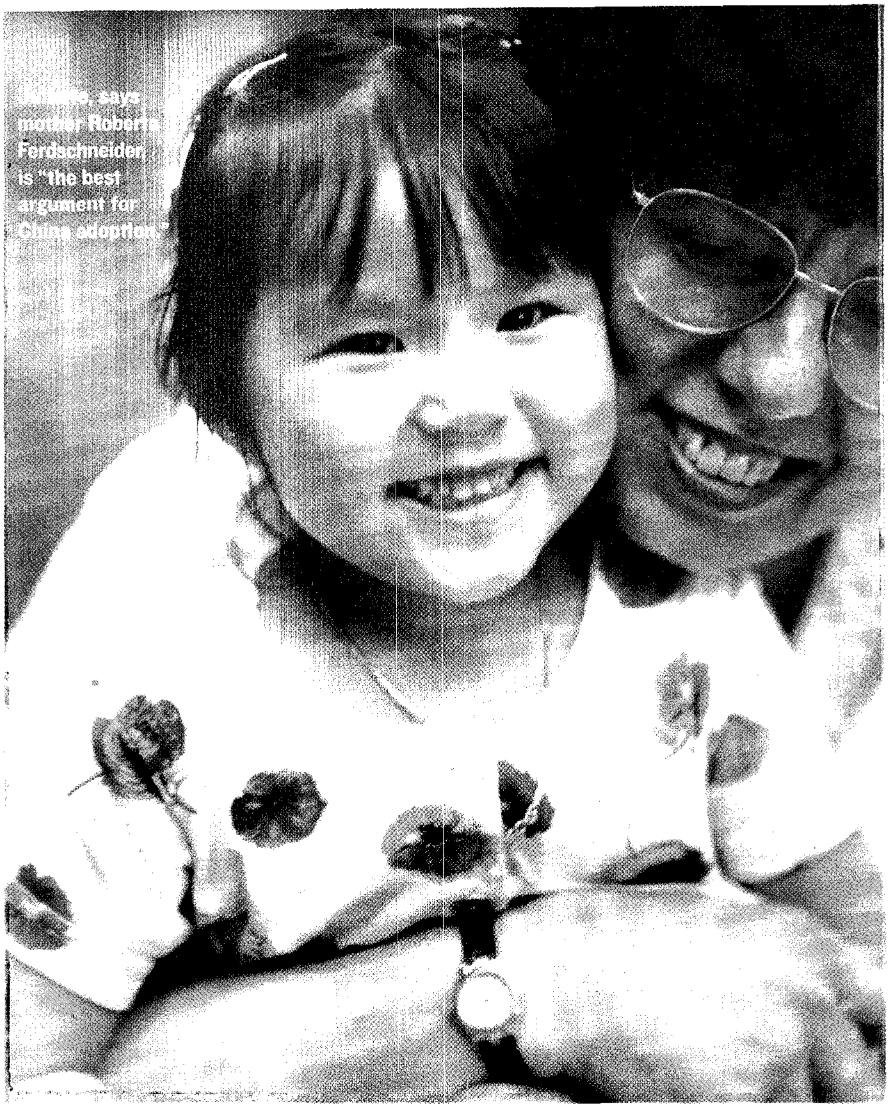
The next morning, when Juliette sat down by the hotel-room door, as if waiting for the orphanage director to return, Roberta sat with her. She touched Juliette's new shoes—both pairs had been too big, but Juliette seemed to like them anyhow. Roberta offered Juliette a set of stacking cups she'd brought, probably the first toys she'd owned. Then, in the hotel room in southern China, Roberta started singing—it was easier than talking—any song she

Photographed by Frank W. Ockenfels 3

Nina, Juliette, and Sarah shared a Mandarin nanny—and a remarkable background.

could remember. She sang “If I Fell,” by the Beatles, and “Eensy Weensy Spider.”

By the end of the second day, a transformation had occurred. The former Wu Pei Yue needed to have Roberta in her sight every moment. “I strapped her into the stroller”—she’d never been in a stroller—“and wheeled it next to the bathtub just so I could take a shower,” said Roberta.


Juliette, says mother Roberta Ferdschneider, is “the best argument for China adoption.”

WALK INTO ANY UPPER WEST SIDE PLAYground or Park Slope day-care center, or visit a pre-k or a play group in the Village or Chelsea, and you’re likely to spot Chinese girls—almost all the orphans are girls—with white parents. “I was sitting in a park one day on the Upper West Side and my Chinese daughter was playing in the sandbox with another little Chinese girl,” recalled one parent. “I looked over for the other girl’s parents. It was so surprising. They were Chinese. ‘Oh,’ I recall thinking, ‘I guess that can happen.’ ”

By the end of last year, some 19,000 young Chinese girls had been taken by American parents. It’s a pretty good guess that the largest number has ended up somewhere in the New York area, with people like Roberta Ferdschneider. Most plunked down $15,000 or $20,000 and boarded a plane to China, traveling in groups whose members quickly picked one another out by the stroller without the kid. After they picked up their little girls out in the countryside—most were likely the children of peasants—they headed, almost every one of them, to the same hotel, the five-star White Swan next to the American consulate, where’d they’d get their papers. Sometimes the hotel had a couple of floors of new parents with new daughters. The parents traded diapers and information, wondering all the while the same things that Roberta pondered: Would it click? A Chinese child, a white Jewish mother? Or Italian? Or Irish?

“Couldn’t you get a white child?” one adoptive parent’s father had bluntly asked. It was a thoughtless question. And yet every adopting parent wondered if ties of blood, of race, of ethnicity, of looks, of history—all the traditional elements of family identity—really would matter. And if they didn’t, then what would it take to conjure up an identity for this new New Yorker, a Juliette-to-be, for this “mishmash of a family,” as one adoptive parent put it?

The girls were, of course, New Yorkers, baptized as Catholics or Protestants or, as in Juliette’s case, probably headed for bat mitzvahs, and as such fit snugly into other identities. (A joke among adoptive parents is that Jewish women are raising a whole generation of Chinese girls. Sometimes it seems that way. Last year, Roberta took Juliette to a Passover seder with three adopted Chinese girls—all Jewish.)

Yet the children were unmistakably Chinese, too; it was a fact you couldn’t get around. Many of these parents are taking this circumstance as a mission, raising their kids in full recognition of their faraway origins. There are, in these lives, Chinese nannies, Chinese schools, Chinese summer camps, trips to Chinatown, and play groups with children just like themselves. It’s an ambitious undertaking, one that’s not only about bringing up a child but also about educating and changing themselves.

“THESE PARENTS LIKE T
THE CHINESE DO—I WAS IMPRE

THE CHOICES THESE NEW YORKERS ARE MAKing now flow out of ones they’d bypassed earlier. They were generally late bloomers, certainly when it came to families. Many had been career-centered. They’d dawdled on their way to parenthood—sometimes until biological families were out of the question. “I was like that T-shirt that says OOPS! I FORGOT TO HAVE A BABY,” says trend-spotter Faith Popcorn, founder of the consulting firm Brain Reserve, who was in her late forties by the time she got the baby urge. (“Adopting is a trend,” she says.)

China, as if intending to appeal to just this group, preferred “mature” parents for its orphans—until two years ago you had to be at least 35; now it’s 30. What’s more, while other countries ruled out singles, the Chinese government welcomed them. And also, importantly, China had babies in abundance. To control its burgeoning population, China limited most families to one child, a limit that’s enforced with stiff fines. Since Chinese families preferred boys—boys would support parents in their old age, it was said—girls were selectively aborted, occasionally left to die, or abandoned at bus stops or police stations or public parks. While Chinese demographers already had begun to ponder another problem—a surfeit of bachelors—Chinese orphanages filled up with girls, perhaps several hundred thousand of them.

Roberta Ferdschneider, meanwhile, had been drifting. One day a friend offhandedly told Roberta, "You should be a mother." She had sometimes thought so herself. She was the type to take care of people, to make them feel at ease, but she hadn't found a suitable partner till she was almost 40. Still, her boyfriend didn't particularly want a child, and by the time they'd started trying, she couldn't get pregnant. "For years," she said, "I contemplated the meaningless of my life." Soon, though, Roberta found herself typing a question into an Internet bulletin board: *I'm 48, can I adopt?* Who knew exactly what prompted her. She stared at the screen.

Someone wrote back, suggesting she look into adopting a Chinese girl.

NOW, THOUGH, THE QUESTION HAD BECOME more complicated: How should she and her new daughter go about becoming a Chinese-American family? Like every Chinese girl, Juliette came with a Certificate of Abandonment, an official document which simply said she'd been found in a village and the People's Government took her to an orphanage. When she was 3, Juliette had one day insisted to Roberta, "We have to go to China today. I know I can find my Chinese mommy." Roberta simply told her the truth—there was no way of finding her parents—which Juliette seemed to take in stride.

Still, it was a troubling issue. After her first day at school, one daughter asked her father how people knew she was Chinese, since she hadn't told them. Perhaps their daughters wouldn't be so interested later on, but many parents struggled with how to treat this difference at the heart of their families. "Some people say they just want to be a 'normal' family and ignore the way their family was formed," says Elizabeth St. Clair, who is general counsel to New York City's Health and Hospitals Corporation. "They don't want to emphasize the Chineseness of their kids. But I have this little feeling that all of us in my family have to participate together. And since skin color or culture is important in America, we have to make an effort to honor theirs."

O EVERYTHING
ED AND MOVED."

Many families—St. Clair's included—initiate the process of honoring their kids' Chineseness by keeping part of their daughter's Chinese name. Georgica Swan Pond Rose Petal Qi Xin Popcorn was the name Faith Popcorn assembled for her daughter, though she calls her "g.g." (spelling it lowercase, like e.e. cummings, as she explained). And Andrea Annunziato, an interactive media developer at AIG, called her daughter Nikki Rose Liu Xingping Annunziato. Roberta's daughter was Juliette Peiyue Ferdschneider—a Hebrew name would soon be coming. "They made the name 'Whoopi Goldberg' seem mundane," laughed Susan Caughman, an early adopter and now publisher of *Adoptive Families* magazine.

In many of these families, the most coveted information may be the name of a bilingual nanny: Mandarin-English. Richard Shulberg's wife had managed to find Mary Huang via somebody's cousin. Eventually Mary would take care of a group of four adopted Chinese girls. Sarah Shulberg was one; Roberta's Juliette was another. "Mary was exactly what Nina needed," said Ann Finneran, parent of another one of Mary's charges. "She'd take her and hold her and hug her and say 'I love you' in Chinese and in English."

In fact, Mary Huang wasn't exactly bilingual—her English was far from perfect—but she was terrific with the kids. The girls called her *yiyi,* which in Mary's explanation meant "Mommy's older sister."

Juliette already understood Mandarin and spoke a little—it was either Mandarin or baby talk, Roberta said. Mary cooked for them and set them to playing games. She brought them to the library and the playground. Sarah didn't really like her Chinese name, but sometimes Mary called her Sar Wah Wah, which Mary told her meant "I love you very much." And Juliette was called by her Chinese nickname Pei Pei. Mary is, said Roberta, "a combination grandmother and Mary Poppins."

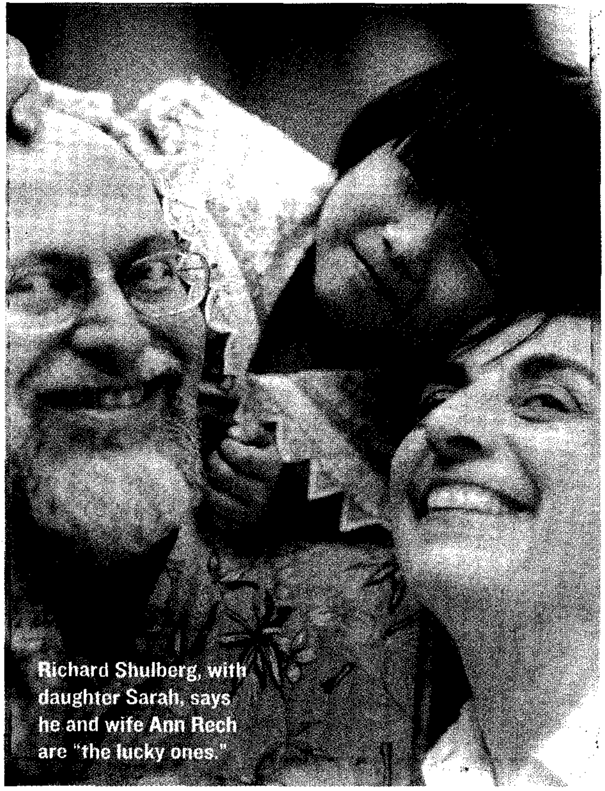
Some parents decided they, too, would like to speak Chinese—for their children, if nothing else. "I would love to learn Mandarin" is the kind of thing you can hear parents say on the Upper West Side these days. Paula Grande, 51 years old, actually took two courses. "I don't have enough years left to learn to read and write," she concluded. All the while, of course, her adorable 6-year-old daughter, Elizabeth Youjing Streeter, who also studied, delighted in correcting her pronunciation.

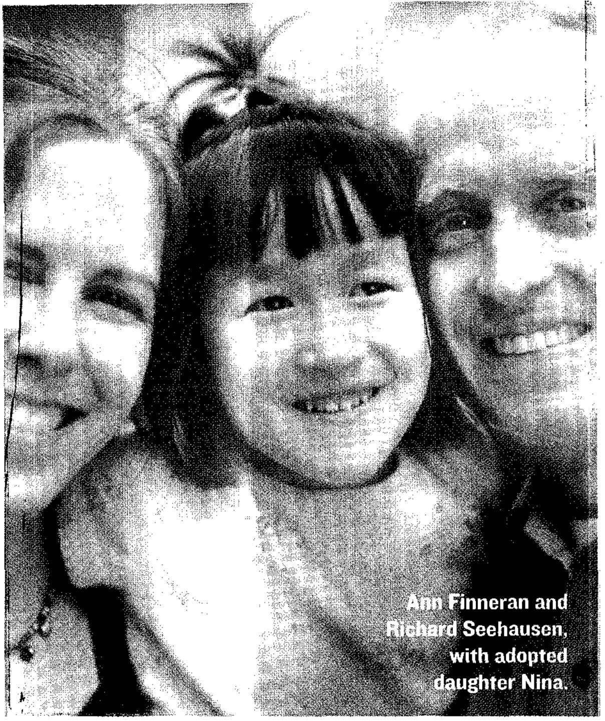
STILL, IN NEW YORK, THERE are lots of other things Chinese to participate in. There is Chinatown, for instance. Robyn Stein, managing director of Pro-Media Public Relations, liked to wheel her daughter through the narrow streets near Mott and Bayard. In supermarkets, older Chinese women stopped her, bent over the stroller, and tried to strike up a conversation. Stein laughed, "My daughter thought she was from Chinatown for a while."

For Chinese New Year, the Chinatown community reached out. Roberta helped organize a group of 30 adoptive families to join the annual parade that winds through Chinatown. Each kid carried a little sign with her name in Chinese and her province of origin. A couple wore traditional Chinese outfits. The parents carried a flag that said ADOPTED CHINESE CHILDREN KNOWING THEIR HERITAGE. "People from the province where my daughter was born gave us a hug," said David Youtz, an assistant director at the Asia Society, father of Sophie, and one of the few parents who speaks Chinese. There were t'ai chi schools and kung fu schools marching and the kids loved it—in part because they got to march in front of a giant paper dragon of a martial-arts troupe, though, as Roberta said, "The parents liked it more."

"We're thinking of a float next year," Roberta said.

IN MANY WAYS, HOWEVER, Chinatown still feels like a foreign place. Perhaps because of this barrier, a new English-friendly Chinese culture—one designed for these eager


Richard Shulberg, with daughter Sarah, says he and wife Ann Rech are "the lucky ones."



Ann Finneran and Richard Seehausen, with adopted daughter Nina.

new families—has been springing up. A lot of it is coordinated by an organization of adoptive families—Families with Children from China, or FCC, as it's known. It's now a nationwide confederation of more than 90 chapters, but it was started half a dozen years ago by a few families holding potluck dinners on the Upper West Side.

The volunteer group devotes part of its resources to bringing Chinese culture to adoptive families. They sponsor celebrations for Chinese holidays, like the New Year and the Autumn Moon Festival, as well as for Chinese Culture Day, a celebration they made up to honor families just like themselves. Now all across the city there are enthusiastic Chinese-holiday celebrations, sometimes even more enthusiastic than those in China. "We have visitors from China who after going to an adoptive parent's home say they haven't seen so many New Year's decorations in all their lives," said Kay Johnson, an adoptive parent and Asian Studies professor at Hampshire College.

"They like to do everything the Chinese do," says Xiaoning Wang, from Beijing, and now Park Slope. "I was impressed and moved." Wang, who has an entrepreneurial bent, saw an opportunity. After bumping into white women with Chinese babies, she formed ChinaSprout.com, which provides Chinese products—her shelves are lined with books, tapes, silk dresses slit up the side, Chinese provincial maps, panda-bear backpacks—and cultural information for families who have adopted from China.

It's possible to wonder if, in all this excitement over a new culture, there's also a kind of pressure, maybe a particularly New York kind of pressure. Do some families feel they have to do Chinese things, and do them really Chinese?

"A lot of adoptive families say you must take Chinese lessons by the time your child is 2, or 3 at the latest," said one parent. "And you have to start Chinese dance classes certainly by 3. Or else you're going to get comments, especially if you don't show up for Chinese New Year."

THE LITTLE RED SCHOOL HOUSE, THE PROgressive school in the West Village, started a Mandarin-language summer camp two years ago—and before it expanded, there was a waiting list. ("I couldn't get my daughter in last year," lamented one mother.) And Little Red, along with St. Luke's, offers after-school enrichment classes in Mandarin as well. All these activities are led by Jennifer Lee, who seems to have pioneered many of these forays into Chinese culture for kids without Chinese parents in part, she says, because of what she's noticed. "Not looking like their parents bothers some kids," she explained. "Some feel ashamed of being Chinese."

ME WORRY: "ARE YOU R
WHO'LL ALWAYS BE DIFFEREN

HERE WAS A PARENT'S BIGGEST fear. It touched just the point where a parent felt least qualified to help. How, after all, could a Caucasian parent help her Chinese kid appreciate her Chineseness? The results might be years off, and yet the experience of a child in psychic pain is a terrible thing.

Jennifer Lee had already noticed a tendency. "Some of the kids don't want to emphasize their Chineseness," she said. In this instance, she figured she had an advantage in getting through to these mixed families: "I don't look like everybody else." Jennifer is part Chinese and part African-American, among other things (she looks kind of Hispanic, though she's not). Jennifer had always identified with the Chinese side of her family—she hardly knew her father—and was stunned when people wouldn't believe that the Chinese woman next to her was her mother. "It was very hurtful," she explained. And she saw the same kind of hurt at work in her classroom. There were kids who started out silent, refusing to participate when Chinese was spoken.

Outside New York, the issue of a girl's Chineseness doesn't always seem so pressing. One adoptive New Yorker had traveled to China with a dozen families from around the country. After adopting, they kept in touch. "The other families don't take Chinese lessons, they don't worry about taking Chinese dance classes, they don't go out for Chinese food," she said.

What was the right emphasis? No one could say. This particular familial alignment hadn't existed in any numbers before. A sense of fitting in, of belonging, seems a delicate act. Maybe, they worry, emphasizing their Chineseness works against those things. "It's a difficult issue. To the degree you emphasize Chinese, you're not really part of the family," said Nancy Reale, a professor at NYU with an adopted daughter. "Are you raising somebody who will always be different from you? Or are you raising a New Yorker like you?"

"The watershed is school," explained Elizabeth St. Clair. There are dual-language schools, mainly in Chinatown, where the kids learn Chinese. "How much of that did I feel comfortable with? How much did I want my family to be marginal to my kids' school experience?" asked St. Clair, who said, "I wanted us to be a more normal part of the mix. I decided on a neighborhood school."

Roberta, though, leaned the other way. Juliette had started off a Mandarin-speaker, and her mother would like her to continue. "I want her to be a citizen of the world," Roberta sometimes said.

Some people warned her that she'd lose context in the mainstream world. "I want Juliette to be confident inside her skin" was her response. She didn't think Juliette would lose touch with mass culture, the one she sees on TV all the time. "I like that my child will be comfortable around Chinese people," she said.

JULIETTE ATTENDS RED APPLE CHILD DEVELOPment Center, a nursery school in Chinatown, and has her sights set on Shuang Wen, a new public school—P. S. 184, housed inside P. S. 134—on the edge of Chinatown. Sarah Shulberg, Sar Wah Wah from Juliette's old play group, is already enrolled. So is the daughter of Paula Grande, who left work so she could be active in her child's upbringing. She's now co-president of Shuang Wen's PTA. The school has 110 students—100 of them Chinese, including five adopted girls with non-Chinese parents. Half the day is taught in English, half in Mandarin. The children actually use different names, morning and afternoon.

Paula's daughter seems to use a variety of names. At roll call, for instance, she's Elizabeth Streeter. In the afternoon, during the Chinese session, she's Ma Youjing. In the Chinese style, Ma, her Chinese family name comes first, though, of course, she doesn't really know her Chinese family name. Ma is the name assigned to everyone from her orphanage—in fact, there's another adopted girl in the school from the same orphanage and thus with the same name. At home, Paula and her husband call her Youjing, which Paula pronounces the American way, *You Jing,* and which her teachers, using the correct pronunciation, say *Yojing,* with a long *o.* (Paula feels that "Yo Jing" sounds a little slangy.)

The children don't seem to mind all this switching back and forth—it's the parents who have trouble keeping up. And the rising competence in Chinese can leave parents feeling a bit out of it, especially with homework. When Chinese homework reaches the kitchen table, Paula, despite the couple of courses she took in Mandarin, has little idea what's going on. "Sometimes I sit with a dictionary," she said, but usually that proves impossible. "The characters look like chicken scratch," she confided. The school ran workshops for parents in Paula's predicament. Still, she said, "sometimes parents can feel estranged."

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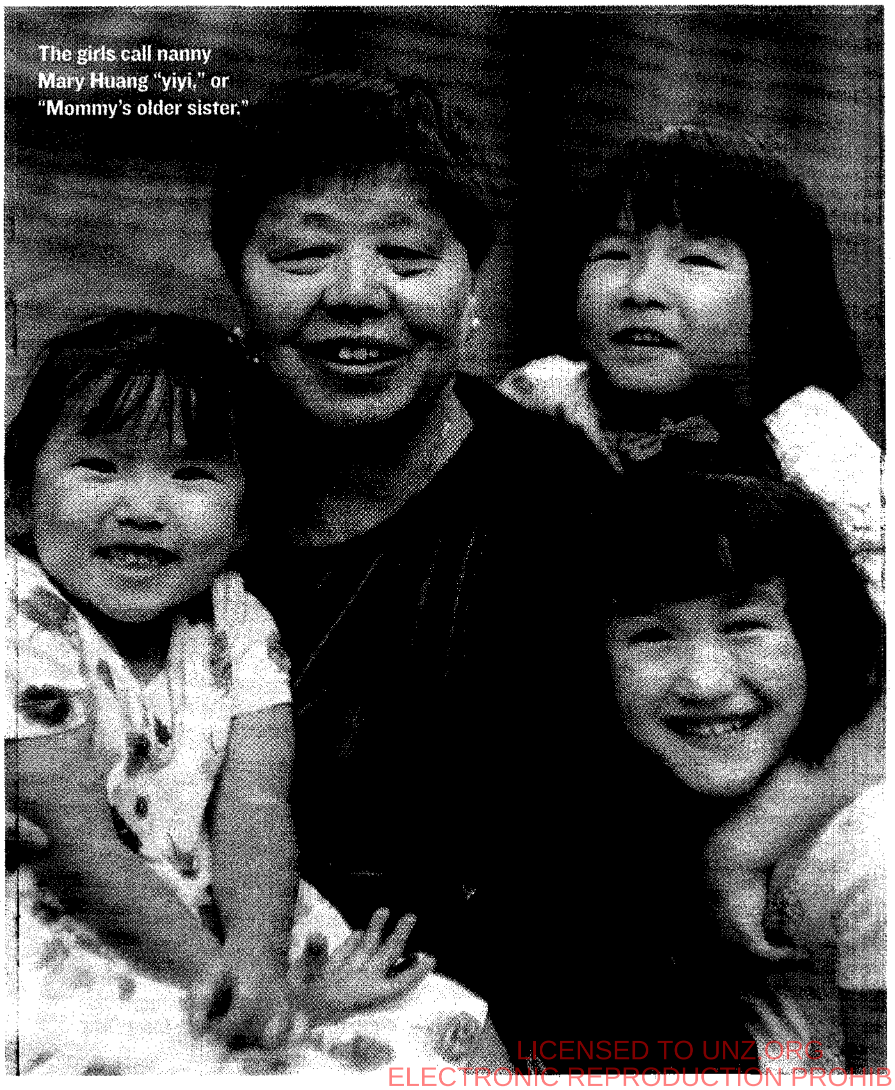
ROM YOU?"



The girls call nanny Mary Huang "yiyi," or "Mommy's older sister."

BEFORE THEY LEFT CHINA, MANY ADOPTIVE parents spent a few days pushing their lightweight strollers through the streets. Wherever they went, older Chinese women bent over to pull up the infants' socks and fluff the strangely thin polarfleece, checking that the infants were warm enough.

Then, invariably, the older women said two words, possibly the only two they knew in English. "Lucky girl. Lucky girl."

Was it true? Even back home, neighbors sometimes congratulated you on being such a generous soul. Some of these children could have died if they hadn't been adopted. They sometimes lived several to a crib. They might have had too little attention, too little sunlight, too little food. Some got rickets. Some had flattened heads from lying so long on their backs. "Olivia's head seemed caved in in the back," said Angela Calamia. "She had boils all over her body, fever, a glazed look in her eyes."

The adoption agency was so concerned it felt compelled to ask: Did she want to trade her child in for another?

"This was my baby. It was as if I gave birth to her," Calamia said. "I would never have taken another child."

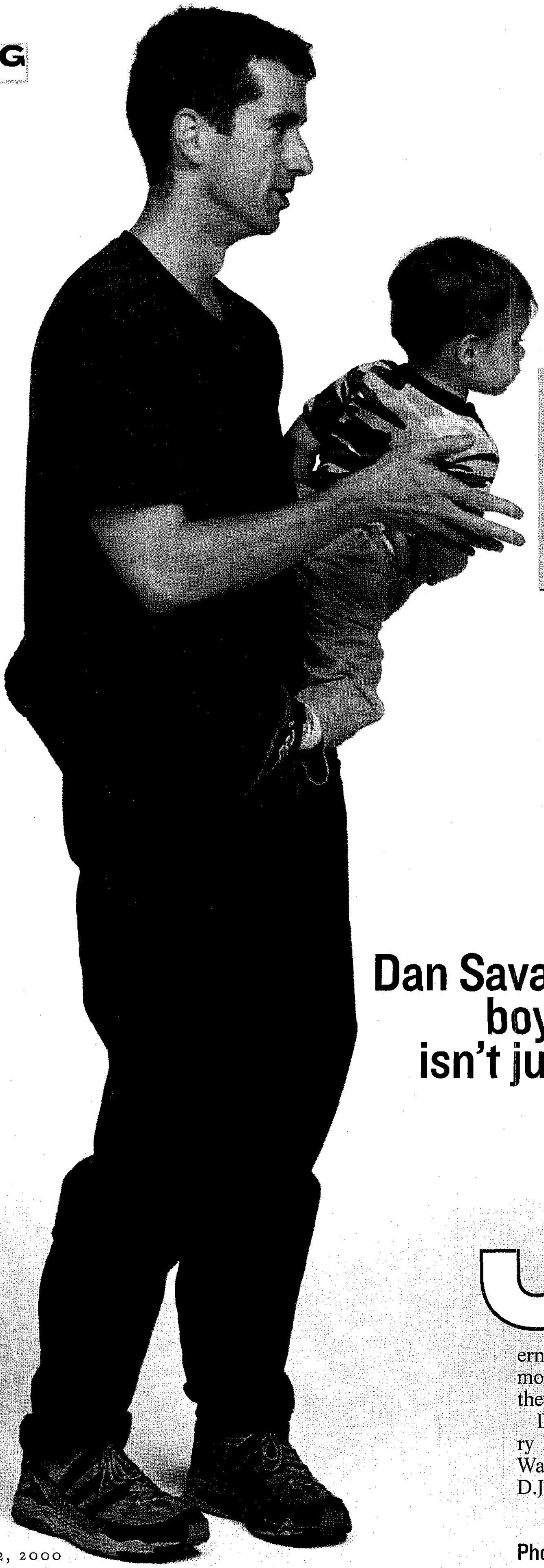
Calamia's daughter, now 2, is as healthy as any American child. And yet if you ask these parents, they bristle at the lucky-girl stuff. "You see these kids playing together and you can think, Yeah, there are lots in the orphanages who aren't adopted," says Sarah's father, Richard Shulberg, who co-produces "The Secret Museum of the Air" for WFMU. "But these kids also represent the needs of parents to create a family, parents who couldn't create a family any other way. We're the lucky ones."

And in fact, it was more than a family they'd ended up with. In the end, the kids gave the parents, really, a sense of belonging. "The decision to adopt from China was the best thing I've ever done," says Roberta. "I love being a mother."

In many cases, family life has proven transformative. "I reached out and made lots of friends, and had a social life centered around my circle of China-adoption friends," says Roberta. Suddenly her calendar bristled with play dates. Meg Tolan, an attorney for the New York Stock Exchange, organized a single-parents group. Elizabeth St. Clair always brought her two adopted Chinese kids, who became best friends with Meg's two. Now, most Saturday nights, they have dinner together.

Sometimes Richie Shulberg, Roberta's friend, imagined them ten years from now, as adolescent girls. They'd be in a Chinese gang, but a nice one. They'd be called the Mei Meis, which he says means "little sisters." Sarah Shulberg would be in it, and of course Juliette Ferdschneider would, too—they'd been friends from their nanny days. They'll wear pink satin jackets bearing the name of their province of origin. "Dad, I need $300 for the Mei Meis," Richie imagined his daughter saying.

For Roberta, these new families have become her whole life. She'd worked as a typesetter, as a manager at a hospital. She's now assistant director of China Seas, an adoption program. When she goes to dinner with people who are thinking about adopting, she takes them to Chinatown and brings Juliette. "She is our best advertisement for China adoption," says Roberta. Juliette eats a few noodles and then, once she's comfortable with people, climbs into their laps, plays with their hair, puts her chubby arms around their necks, as Roberta explains that it's not so hard, really, to be a family. ■



MY T DA

Dan Savage and Jesse Gree
boyfriends—want you
isn't just for straight guy

JESSE GREEN, 41, LIVES WITH HIS partner of five years in a Brooklyn Heights brownstone, along with their two sons, Erez, now 6, and Lucas, 4. Green's partner, Andy, a 50-year-old high-school guidance counselor, adopted the children through a southern agency specializing in Hispanic birth mothers. Both boys were adopted when they were just a few weeks old.

Dan Savage, 35, and his boyfriend, Terry Miller, 29, live together in a Seattle, Washington, farmhouse with their son, D.J., now 2 years old. The couple gained

Photographed by Melanie Dunea

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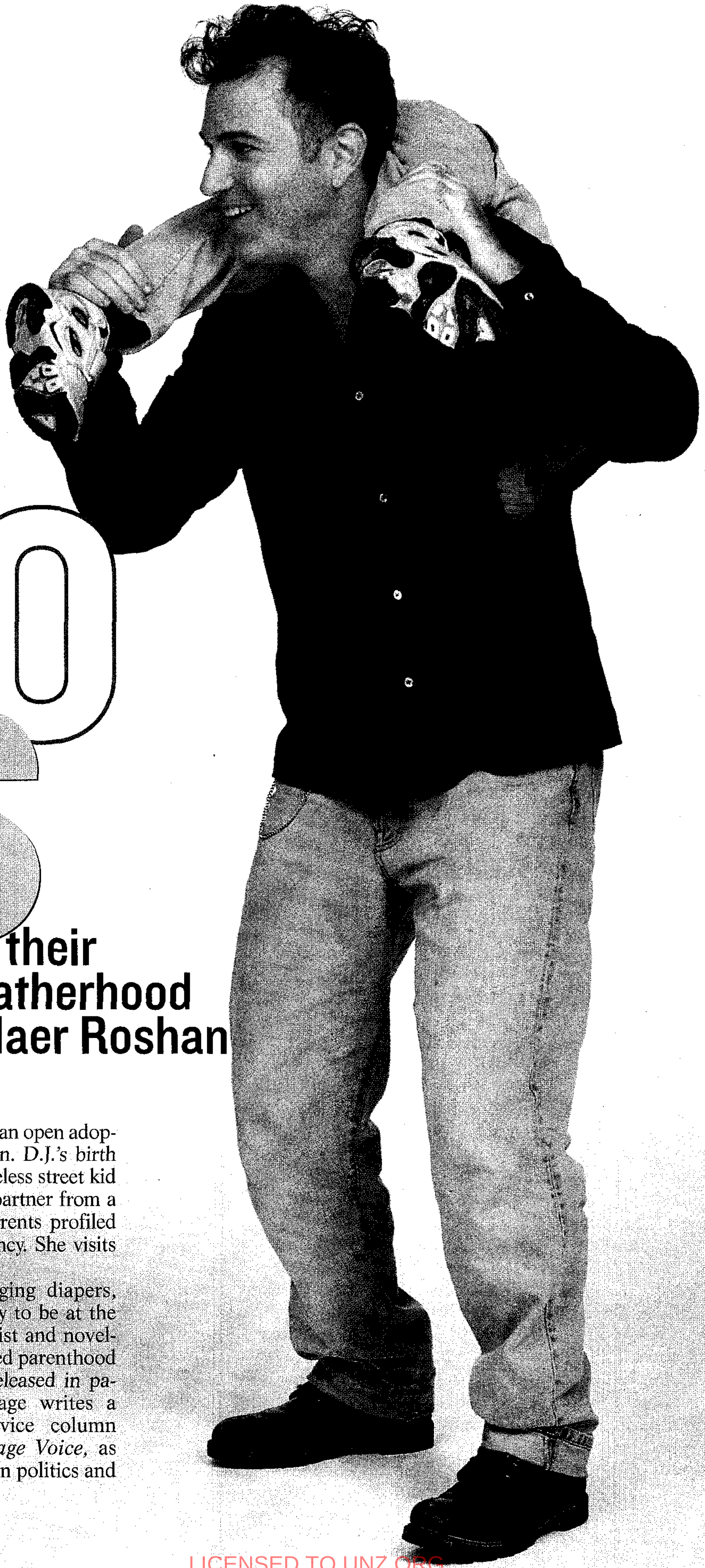


custody of the child through an open adoption on the day he was born. D.J.'s birth mother, Melissa, was a homeless street kid who chose Savage and his partner from a group of 80 prospective parents profiled by a Washington-based agency. She visits her son several times a year.

When they're not changing diapers, Green and Savage are likely to be at the computer. Green, a journalist and novelist, chronicled his unexpected parenthood in *The Velveteen Father,* released in paperback this month. Savage writes a widely syndicated sex-advice column which appears in the *Village Voice,* as well as opinionated pieces on politics and

Boys will be boys: ***This page,*** **Dan Savage and his son, D.J.;** ***opposite,*** **Jesse Green and his son, Erez.**

pop culture for a wide range of publications. *The Kid,* his first-person account of his son's adoption, also comes out in paperback this month. The two men spoke with *New York*'s Maer Roshan about bringing up their boys.

Maer Roshan: *So how did two gay guys end up pushing around a pram?*

Dan Savage: I'd been seriously thinking about having a child for years. At one point, I was talking to a lesbian couple about being a donor dad; then I met my boyfriend; then, two years later, the lesbians broke up and the donor-dad opportunity went away. So we decided, "Let's adopt." We'd been thinking about becoming parents for so long that we felt we were ready for it.

Jesse Green: I'd always believed that as a gay man I wouldn't have any children, and had come to see that, in some ways, as a *benefit* of gayness. Then I met a man who had already adopted a child—a boy then 14 months old. Nine months later, Andy adopted another. He and I have been together five years now, and I'm a parent to these two kids in every way. But I certainly didn't plan on all this. I went out on a date and somehow ended up changing diapers.

M.R.: *Did either of you run into any problems when you tried to adopt?*

D.S.: In my case, it was pretty easy because we were interested in doing an open adoption. Unlike in closed adoptions, where the birth parents never meet the adoptive parents, D.J.'s mother met with us and knew us, and wanted us to have the baby. She has ongoing contact, and she visits with the kid a few times a year.

J.G.: It will take you a long time if you want a blue-eyed white male with blond hair. Other than that, it's not anywhere near as hard as you might think. Whether you want an open adoption or a closed one, you do need to spend some time looking in the right places. Some agencies won't even consider gay parents, but because of the number of babies needing homes, and the number of people who want children, there's a pretty big informal network in place right now for gay people who want to adopt. My partner, Andy, personally placed half a dozen kids himself. The agency calls him and says, "Do you know anybody? We have a kid who's going to be ready soon, and we don't have anyone."

D.S.: Your chances are a lot better if you're willing to take a baby that straight couples might not think about. We weren't D.J.'s birth mother's first choice. She chose us after two couples rejected her because she drank during the pregnancy. People were afraid to adopt him because they were afraid of fetal alcohol syndrome; they thought he'd be fucked up forever. But it turns out all the terror over FAS is overblown anyway. D.J. turned out perfectly okay.

J.G.: That's interesting, because Andy's first adoption was also sped up by the fact that the birth mother used drugs during the pregnancy, something that wasn't known until she was about to deliver. People warned Andy of all sorts of dire outcomes, none of which have occurred.

D.S.: A lot of gay people who adopt come to the conclusion that they are worthy of adopting only kids that straight people discard. D.G. adoption, damaged goods. We decided early on that we didn't want to do a D.G. adoption.

M.R.: *Why not?*

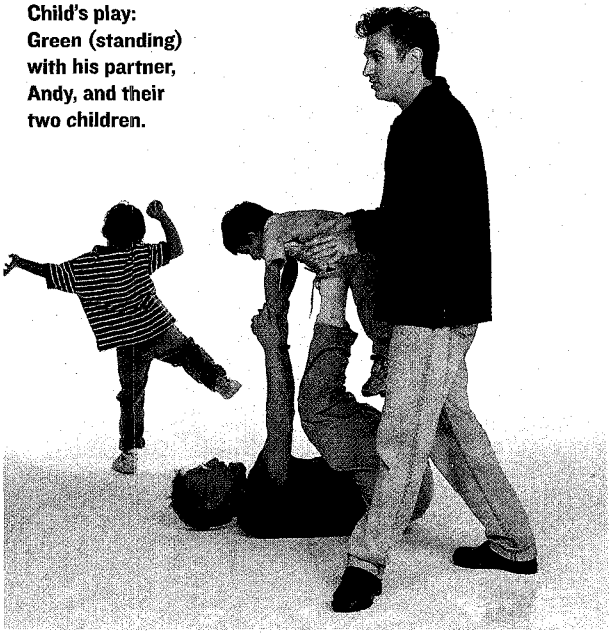
D.S.: It sounds horrible, but we didn't want to start at a disadvantage. We didn't want to spend those first two years with our child undoing the damage that the heterosexual parents had done.

J.G.: The fact is, you're already at a disadvantage in society as a gay parent. Why add on yet another hurdle?

M.R.: *What was the most unexpected problem you ran into as a gay parent?*

D.S.: The hardest thing turns out to be getting on airplanes. We're constantly being stopped. We were trying to get boarding passes to get on a flight when the baby was just like three months old, and the woman behind the counter was like, "Whose baby *is* this?" She picked up the phone to call the police because she thought we were kidnapping him.

GAY PEOPLE WHO SHOULDN’ PARENTS BY ACCIDENT. YOU C



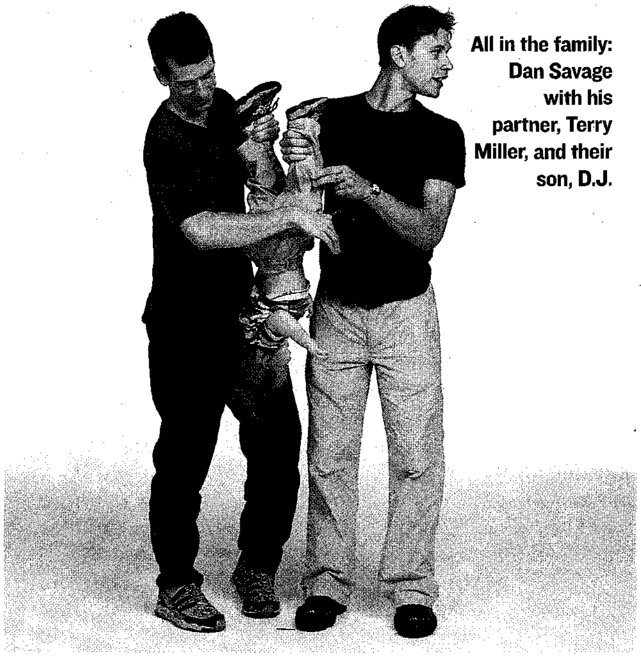
Child's play: Green (standing) with his partner, Andy, and their two children.

Now we carry the birth certificate and the adoption decree in the car, because we have to whip it out constantly. When you get on an airplane, everybody addresses the child. They say, "Who are these boys taking care of you? Are you going to see Mommy? Where's *Mommy*?" We usually answer the question truthfully. "Mommy's in New Orleans, living on the streets, begging for change. That's what Mommy does and likes to do." She's a gutter punk by choice. But all this questioning becomes very tiring. You're constantly being dragged out of the closet.

J.G.: It's the most constant outing imaginable, because everyone demands to know your family story. And the truth is, I understand the curiosity. But it *is* tiring. I don't have the problem in airports, because the kids have Andy's last name. But a lot of people do ask Erez where his mother is. Recently it was reported to me that when people ask him "Where is your mommy?" he says, "She's dead." Which isn't true, as far as we know. But it may be his truth right now. It's not as if he doesn't know the real story. Since he was born, he was told how he came to be with Andy and me. There have been different phases when he's asked, "Where's Mommy?" or "Is *that* my Mommy?" and we tell him the story again, and he'll transform it into something else. Now it's transformed into "She's dead." But he doesn't seem to have any longing for a mother, any more than he does for a sister he never knew.

That's probably, in part, because of where we live, in Brooklyn, in a community where there is no norm left. Every day, Erez and Lucas see kids who have single moms, two moms, have interracial or blended families—every possible kind of mix.

D.S.: Even so, people express an awful lot of misplaced concern on behalf of our son. They are inordinately concerned that D.J. is going to look around and say, "Why isn't my family like every other



All in the family: Dan Savage with his partner, Terry Miller, and their son, D.J.

family?" The reality is, very few families in my neighborhood live up to the mythical standard.

M.R.: *I guess the concern is that kids are cruel and it's so hard to grow up anyway, that to afflict a child with this additional burden is unkind.*

J.G.: There will always be something your kids will find lacking in you as a parent. If it weren't being gay, it would be that we look funny, or that one of us writes for a living, or that we're too Jewish or not Jewish enough. You just try to give them the strength to withstand their own rebellions. When it's time for our kids to be angry at us . . .

D.S.: They'll find something.

M.R.: *Do you think that moment is inevitable?*

D.S.: I expect there's going to be a sociosexual dynamic when he is in high school when people will say horrible things to him about why two gay men would want to adopt a boy. We intend to work very hard to make sure that's not an issue.

But even though I make my living writing about sex, it's important to me that my son grows up in as much denial about his parents' sexuality as I grew up about my parents' sexuality.

J.G.: Do you try to hide the fact that you're lovers?

D.S.: [*Laughs*] No, we're not going to try to fool him into believing we're just roommates with a king-size bed. But we try to create this zone of comfort for him.

J.G.: It's a question of context. There are things you do as adults only among adults. Kids don't have to be made aware of everything at once.

M.R.: *Do either of you worry that your children will reject you when they're older?*

J.G.: I think there will come a time when they will be looking for something, as every kid does, to rebel against. This would be as handy as anything else. And while I am hopeful that my children will grow up to be broad-minded, tolerant men, I know that it is very possible that I am lavishing attention and love and money on people who are probably going to be nasty to me for a few years.

D.S.: It's the obvious thing to latch on to. You worry about your boys' growing up to become the boys who tortured you when you were a kid.

M.R.: *Do you ever feel that your kids lose out on anything by not having a female figure in the house?*

D.S.: In my case, D.J. is constantly around my mother and Terry's mother—they're engaged in this relay race—so it's not like he's lacking females in our house. There are lots of women in his life. People assume that two gay men raising a baby are raising it in a bathhouse somewhere, or on an RSVP cruise, in some all-male environment. And you know, the truth is, he's going to have female teachers. He has a female pediatrician. He has an aunt. He has two grandmas. He has so many women in his life that he's not going to want for them. But he's lucky that he has two parents, you know?

J.G.: Like you, we have a lot of women in our lives. But we're still an all-male family, and for the kids, there remains a bit of mystery about females. One day my son, Erez, walked into the bedroom of a friend who was staying with us as she was taking her shirt off—he wasn't supposed to go in, but he did—and he saw her breasts, and he said, "Oh, I know what those big floppy things are; those are your eggs!" And she later told us that maybe we should get a copy of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* to help him out [*laughs*]. And indeed, the next day I was drawing cows and udders and women's breasts.

D.S.: Parenting is about being competent and responsible. It's not about gender, necessarily. Every day, Terry and I walk into D.J.'s room just after he wakes up, and he jumps up and down; he's very happy to see us. I really don't think he's thinking, "It's too bad there isn't a vagina here, too." You know what I mean?

M.R.: *Some scientific studies suggest that women are more naturally inclined to be nurturers than men are.*

D.S.: Yes. But when you're talking about 3 billion people, there are going to be exceptions—hundreds of millions of exceptions. Frankly, I don't think a couple of hypermasculine, buzz-cutted Chelsea gym boys should adopt. But I don't think they *want* to adopt. And unlike, say, straight people who shouldn't be parents, gay people who shouldn't be parents are unlikely to become parents by accident. You can't get drunk one night and adopt.

J.G.: I question the science you mentioned. In any case, there's a tendency to measure gay families against a fantasy template of non-gay families. Once, when I was doing a radio show, a guy called up and said, "You know, I despise gay parenting. A child needs love and nurturing, and how the hell is he going to get that with two men?"

D.S.: Now, think about what that implies, the idea that men are somehow incapable of love and nurturing.

M.R.: *What kind of reception do you get at PTA meetings?*

D.S.: My son is only 2, so no PTA meetings yet. But we've been well received at pediatricians' offices and fast-food outlets. The only places we sometimes feel uncomfortable, frankly, is on the gay strip in the city where we live.

M.R.: *Has being a gay parent alienated you from the gay community?*

D.S.: I find that most gay people, like most straight people, are idiots, and I find idiots pretty alienating. Gay ghettos are a nice place to spend your twenties, but who can live there forever? Ultimately, there's no such thing as "gay community." There are your friends, and your family, and that's your community. My community has always been mixed, gay and straight.

E PARENTS ARE UNLIKELY TO BECOME

'T GET DRUNK ONE NIGHT AND ADOPT.

J.G.: I agree with that. It's true that we have felt a bit like pariahs in some gay settings. Not just because of the obvious, absurd attacks we get on political grounds—that we are betraying gayness by collaborating with some sort of heterosexual Vichy—but subtler things, too. Some gay men seem to feel we are passing an unfavorable judgment on their childlessness just because we do have children. When Erez was a baby, we took him to a fundraiser in the Hamptons, and many men turned away from us. A baby disrupts a room's sexual energy—just ask its parents. And I think, for some older men, a baby may be a painful symbol of what they gave up.

On the other hand, straight people have been more accepting than we expected. Erez used to go—and Lucas still goes—to a preschool run by Lubavitchers in our neighborhood. Initially, I had grave doubts about allowing this: I was afraid there would be more Menachem Schneerson than Barney. But we've been repeatedly surprised by the reaction to us. They've been warm and open and blissfully unconcerned.

Even so, as good a job as you do, the outside world has a way of impinging on you. Early in the morning is the best time of day with our kids, when we're all in bed together and cuddling; it's just wonderful and emotionally satisfying. But some mornings, in the middle of all this happiness, I have this self-conscious awareness, like there's a camera in the room. I think, "God, we are Jesse Helms's worst nightmare. Here are two men . . ."

D.S.: . . . in bed.

J.G.: In bed, either naked or mostly naked, and two boys wearing very little, crawling all over . . .

D.S.: I feel that, too. Those moments where you think, "If this scene was observed, what would people make of it?"

M.R.: *How does it make you feel?*

D.S.: It's the same feeling you get when you're a gay man in a locker room with a bunch of straight guys who know you're gay. Suddenly you feel like you have to avert your eyes, like you did in high school, for fear of being discovered, even though you've done nothing wrong. Gay men are so afraid of these bullshit stereotypes about child molesting that they go the other way; they're afraid of even the most innocent contact with children.

GAY MEN ARE SEEN AS SEXUALLY SUSPECT NO MATTER WHOM THEY'RE PARENTING.

J.G.: My response is to be more steadfast in not acting on that impulse.

D.S.: It's essential to fight this feeling that forbids you from being intimate with your children, because your child will suffer if you aren't. I was talking to a straight friend, a dad, about this, and he said, "You fall in love with your child, you kiss their toes, their thighs, and there's almost nothing about your child that you don't as a parent put in your mouth." It is a physical kind of love. There's a kind of romance between a new child and a parent that creates the kind of bond that would make you jump in traffic for your kid. And it would be so awful to let ignorant stereotypes prevent you from falling in love with your kid.

M.R.: *Was there ever a moment where you thought about adopting a girl to prevent this?*

J.G.: I don't know if it would prevent it. I think men—and especially gay men—are seen as sexually suspect no matter whom they're parenting.

D.S.: It wasn't up to us whether we had a boy or a girl.

M.R.: *How do you and your boyfriend divide up the child-raising duties?*

D.S.: When we adopted the baby, Terry stopped working. He stays home and takes care of the baby. Terry has sort of become the mom, and he does the laundry and he washes the bottles, and I make the money and I come home, and I give the baby the bath, and sometimes I leave before the baby is awake and I come home after the baby is asleep. It's *Ozzie and Harriet,* really. It's hard to talk about it without it sounding just corny and thoughtless. It sort of shook out this way. It's not that I *can't* do laundry. It's just that I don't have to.

J.G.: Since we can't divide the chores according to traditional established gender roles, we get to divide them according to ability and taste. It's not as even as in your situation, which falls to some degree into traditional categories. Andy cooks, I clean, we both sing, and we both roughhouse. But it's funny how that awful question, "Well, who's the girl?" has become "Who's the mom?"

M.R.: *Do you find yourself competing for your child's affection?*

D.S.: Well, we joke about it. It exists, and it's real, and we frost it with irony to make it not so damaging for either of us. But we jokingly compete. And there are times when the baby just wants to be with me and times when the baby just wants to be with Terry, and at those times we look at each other and go, "Ha-ha, the baby likes me better!"

M.R.: *Would you rather your sons grew up to be straight or gay?*

D.S.: My feeling is that D.J.'s already a straight boy, because he *loves* little girls. I also loved little girls when I was a boy, but I wanted to play with their dolls. He wants to kiss them. I never wanted to do that. And he smashes shit. I mean, my mother says that when I was a little boy I never smashed *anything.* But he belches, he farts, he throws up—he's so fucking straight!

J.G.: Doesn't it bring into question the whole idea of how gayness is constructed? I mean, your evidence that your kid is probably straight is based on the kinds of prejudices we railed against as gay kids. Like liking girls or smashing things. Does that *really* suggest they're more likely to be heterosexual? It's true that as our boys have grown up, they've developed certain familiar boyish behaviors that are just like the ones that used to intimidate me as a child.

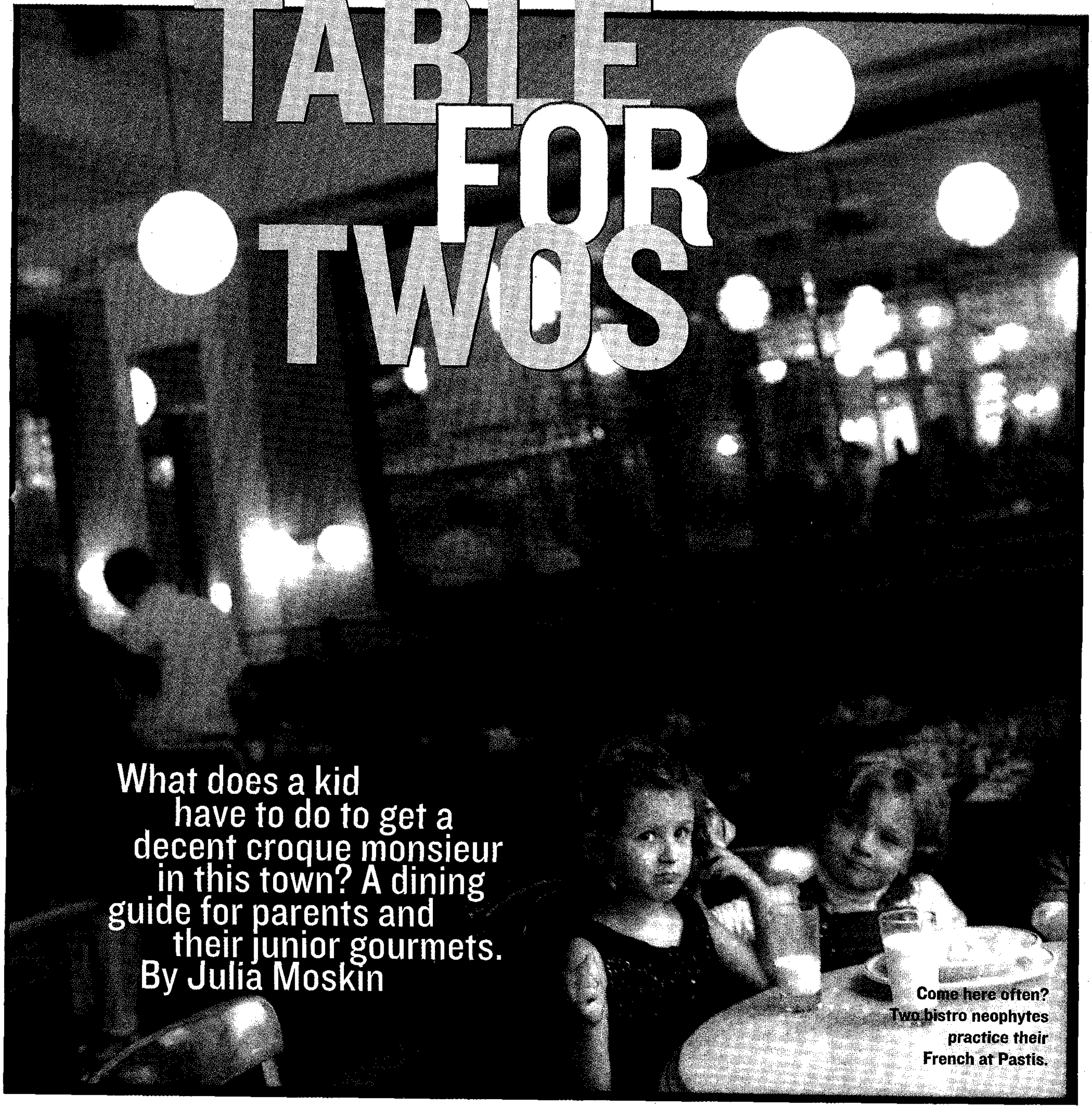
D.S.: You don't want to discourage him from being the boy you were afraid of when *you* were a boy.

J.G.: Exactly. But on the other hand, we are compelled by our own experience to find more meaningful ways to define what "good boys" should be. You know, Andy and I both feel that the likelihood of our boys being gay is the same as it would be for anyone else's boys: 4 percent? Ten percent? Not very much. But we've been trying to do everything we can do to make them gayer. We play musicals, and every night I sing them to sleep with a medley from *The King and I* [*laughs*]. So we were kind of delighted when Erez, our older boy, told us that he wanted to go to ballet class. He was very interested in ballet, and he had seen Lourdes Lopez on *Sesame Street.* So we thought, "Great!" Because, all kidding aside, and assuming they *will* be straight boys, we hope in some way that they will be a different kind of straight boy than the kind that I grew up terrified of. Maybe they'll be very sensitive. They'll certainly know that men cook and do all the housework—to the extent that anyone does. If they *do* end up straight, they'll be a real catch. ■

TABLE FOR TWOS

What does a kid have to do to get a decent croque monsieur in this town? A dining guide for parents and their junior gourmets.

By Julia Moskin



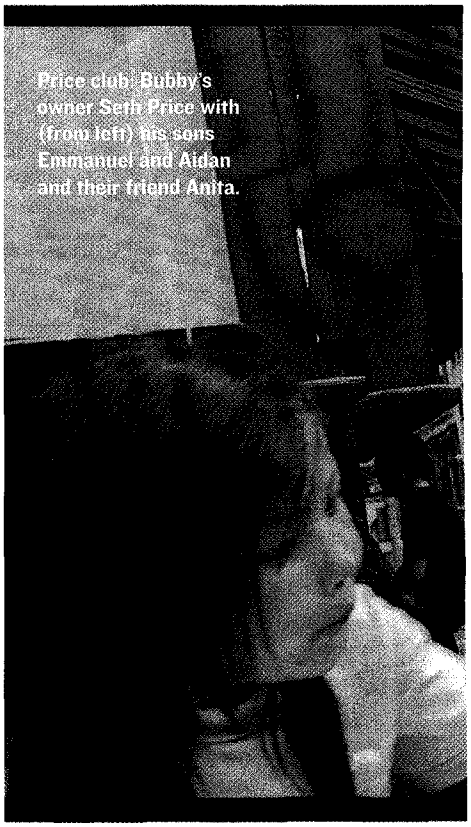
Come here often? Two bistro neophytes practice their French at Pastis.

NEW YORK PARENTS LOVE THE idea of taking their kids to restaurants. They think raising A Child Who Eats Everything—an infant connoisseur of Vietnamese pho and ropa vieja and tarte Tatin—is the true test of urban parenting. My own parents recall the moment I began using chopsticks more clearly than the moment I began walking. Like other New Yorkers, they believed that kids who taste okra and oysters will grow up adventurous and open-minded, that tolerance can be taught with squid salad.

It's a lovely fantasy, and typically ambitious, but for all their success at accomplishing the impossible (*you* try bringing up a sane child in Manhattan), most parents are still afraid to take their kids to a decent restaurant. Otherwise fearless New Yorkers dread nothing in the world more than the outbreak of a full-bore tantrum in some quiet little boîte. I've had fathers confess to breaking a nervous sweat just from wheeling the stroller through a restaurant's door, and all street-smart parents are attuned to those subtle signs of unwelcome: a dimly lit dining room, a cool, assessing gaze at your toddler, tables of suits. (And the not-so-subtle ones, like those NO STROLLERS signs.)

Parents take the easy way out, relying

Photographed by Sylvia Plachy



Price club: Bubby's owner Seth Price with (from left) his sons Emmanuel and Aidan and their friend Anita.

on openly "kid-friendly" restaurants, where plastic stands in for fine china and French fries stand in for everything else. They wind up traveling the safe, dull path from EJ's to Eli's to Annie's, with an occasional high-anxiety adventure at a theme restaurant like Mars 2112 or an overpriced sugarfest at Serendipity 3. Once they become parents, New Yorkers who used to spring for tuna tartare learn to live with tuna melts instead.

But don't give up just yet. Patroon will probably never install a changing table in the men's room, but more adult hangouts than you realize are prepared to meet parents halfway. If you follow three simple rules—eat early, eat ethnic, eat expensive (at least more expensive than the greasy ghetto of the kiddie-menu joints)—then taste-stretching meals are still very much within your grasp.

"I DON'T EVEN THINK MY KIDS ACTUALLY
IT'S REALLY EEL UNDER ALL THAT BARBECU

EATING EARLY

The wisest restaurateurs welcome the opportunity to fill empty tables at odd hours. And since parents are at the mercy of their kids' byzantine schedules—what with school, after-school, Hebrew school, soccer, breast-feeding, whatever—why not nip into restaurants at strange times? Cafés like **Avenue** (serving just the kind of food you'd make yourself if you had any time), **Balthazar**, **Blue Ribbon Bakery** (great bread and sweets), pierogi-pushing **Veselka**, and the ever-dependable **French Roast** and **Time Café** are actually more pleasant between mealtimes than during them. Mornings, long before the lunch frenzy, **Pastis** may be the best place in the city to eat with your child: quiet (not manic) French charm, peaceful (but not too). The wide-open spaces between tables offer an ideal comfort zone, and the morning cooks are not above scrambling an egg for your 2-year-old. Stagger into NoLIta's **Café Habana** in late afternoon; you'll find impossibly slim mothers sipping café con leche and watching their kids demolish plates of rice and beans.

Another way to increase the odds of having a decent meal is to choose places that offer ample room to maneuver. One Brooklyn father reveals his bottom line: "A bubble of your own space, where your stroller and your noise and your mess don't have to bother anyone else." Be grateful for the lofty spaces at the original **Two Boots** pizzeria on Avenue A; TriBeCa's surprisingly friendly **Odeon** and **City Hall**; **Yura & Co** on upper Third Avenue (downscale but with high-quality food); the Upper West Side branch of **John's Pizzeria** (where there's usually a clutch of kids watching the pizza-makers); the group-friendly **Ernie's**; and the dazzling **Ruby Foo's**—all early-evening havens where families can comfortably spread out.

EATING ETHNIC

It's also a well-documented phenomenon among New York parents that the same kid who will ingest nothing but bananas and bologna at home will go mad for tofu with kimchi in a restaurant. It's just a matter of matching tastes. If your baby used to demand a daily pasta fix at home, start thinking about the city's Asian noodle shops. Uptown, Thai and Vietnamese traditions reign at **Rain**, **Monsoon**, **River**, and **Lili's Noodle Shop**. SoHo's bustling **Kelley & Ping** is always fun, and you can be in and out in minutes. When you're in Chinatown, **New York Noodle Town** more than lives up to its name.

Kids are suckers for food that comes wrapped up in its own edible packaging: dumplings, spring rolls, pierogi, quesadillas, cannoli, even edamame, the soybeans that Japanese restaurants serve in the pod. The best overall choices among Japanese restaurants are the places that don't even try to cultivate a Zen calm but bow to New York energy: **Sushiya**, **Tatany**, and **Zutto** are child-friendly enough, and **Hasaki** is suitably low-key in the early evening.

We're not pushing raw fish for the little ones—that's asking *too* much—but sushi bars also serve those delectable deep-fried and barbecue-sauced items. (We call it the McNugget Effect.) "I don't even think my kids actually believe it's really eel under all that barbecue sauce," one father ruminates, "and they definitely don't know that there's a soft-shell crab inside the tempura in the spider rolls." And why should they? **Genki Sushi** rolls out its dishes on a conveyor belt that perpetually circles the restaurant like a baggage carousel—a spectacle that dazzles all children (and most adults).

EATING EXPENSIVE

If you're willing to throw logic to the winds and spend real money on dining with your kids, choose restaurants that truly pride themselves on service, especially those where the chef or owner is a parent. All over the high-end universe, it's become easier to get bottles warmed up and bowls of spaghetti with butter than it used to be, now that twentysomething chef-princes no longer rule New York's kitchens. Bobby Flay of **Mesa Grill** and **Bolo** ordered a dozen high chairs after he had a daughter.

"I have to admit I never gave a second thought to kids in the restaurants where I cooked until I had kids of my own," says chef Don Pintabona of **Tribeca Grill**, where you're likely to get friendlier service with children than without. Pintabona often steps out from behind the stove to show kids how his ice-cream machine works, and Sunday brunch there has the feeling of an indoor block party. Any server in the **Union Square Cafe** family (Gramercy Tavern, Tabla, Eleven Madison Park) is well trained to handle family psychodrama.

If those high-energy rooms are too much for your sensitive 5-year-old but you're set on a little luxury, there are still other choices. **Christer's** has a festive Pee-Wee's Playhouse décor, and city kids weaned on smoked salmon will be happy with the gravlax-heavy menu. Uptown, **La Mirabelle** is a friendly Gallic cocoon where you might introduce older kids to Old

BELIEVE SAUCE.”

Guard French cooking. **Beacon**’s two levels offer plenty of room to play hide-and-seek in, and the wood-burning grill in its open kitchen will fascinate miniature pyromaniacs. For special events, parents praise the service and views at **Bryant Park Grill**, and tout the simple food and magnificent setting of **Michael Jordan’s The Steak House NYC** (but don’t expect much in the way of sports paraphernalia: Steak is the star here).

The bottom line when it comes to dining with children is remembering that disaster can strike at any moment. “Get them in, get them fed, get them out,” chants an Upper West Side father of three, which means you need servers who *understand.* Ruby Foo’s owner Steve Hansen knows that when a kid’s order says “no sauce,” it means *no sauce* anywhere near the food, the plate, or the table. One place that continues to work best for parents, kids, and innocent bystanders alike is **Bubby’s** in TriBeCa. Owner Seth Price’s successful formula is to combine high-quality comfort food, a laid-back room, and plenty of distractions like crayons and balloons. His macaroni and cheese has become the great common denominator—the universal solvent—satisfying kids, parents, hipsters, and business-lunchers alike. ▬

Beyond Kid-Friendly: Where to Eat Now

Avenue, 520 Columbus Ave., at 85th St. (212-579-3194)
Balthazar, 80 Spring St. (212-965-1414)
Beacon, 25 W. 56th St. (212-332-0500)
Blue Ribbon Bakery, 33 Downing St. (212-337-0404)
Bolo, 23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200)
Bryant Park Grill, 25 W. 40th St. (212-840-6500)
Bubby’s, 120 Hudson St. (212-219-0666)
Café Habana, 17 Prince St. (212-625-2001)
Christer’s, 145 W. 55th St. (212-974-7224)
City Hall, 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777)
Ernie’s, 2150 Broadway, at 75th St. (212-496-1588)
French Roast, 78 W. 11th St. (212-533-2233)
Genki Sushi, 9 E. 46th St. (212-983-5018)
Hasaki, 210 E. 9th St. (212-473-3327)
John’s Pizzeria, 48 W. 65th St. (212-721-7001)
Kelley & Ping, 127 Greene St. (212-228-1212)
La Mirabelle, 102 W. 86th St. (212-496-0458)
Lili’s Noodle Shop, 1500 Third Ave., at 84th St. (212-639-1313)
Mesa Grill, 102 Fifth Ave., at 15th St. (212-807-7400)
Michael Jordan’s The Steak House NYC, Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300)
Monsoon, 435 Amsterdam Ave., at 81st St. (212-580-8686)
New York Noodle Town, 28½ Bowery (212-349-0923)
Odeon, 145 W. Broadway (212-233-0507)
Pastis, 9 Ninth Ave. (212-929-4844)
Rain, 100 W. 82nd St. (212-501-0776); 1059 Third Ave., at 62nd St. (212-223-3669)
River, 345 Amsterdam Ave., at 76th St. (212-579-1888)
Ruby Foo’s, 2182 Broadway, at 77th St. (212-724-6700)
Sushiya, 28 W. 56th St. (212-247-5760)
Tatany, 380 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-686-1871)
Time Café, 2330 Broadway, at 85th St. (212-579-5100)
Tribeca Grill, 375 Greenwich St. (212-941-3900)
Two Boots, 37 Ave. A (212-505-2276)
Union Square Cafe, 21 E. 16th St. (212-243-4020)
Veselka, 144 Second Ave. (212-228-9682)
Yura & Co., 1645 Third Ave., at 92nd St. (212-860-8060)
Zutto, 77 Hudson St. (212-233-3287); 62 Greenwich Ave. (212-229-1796)

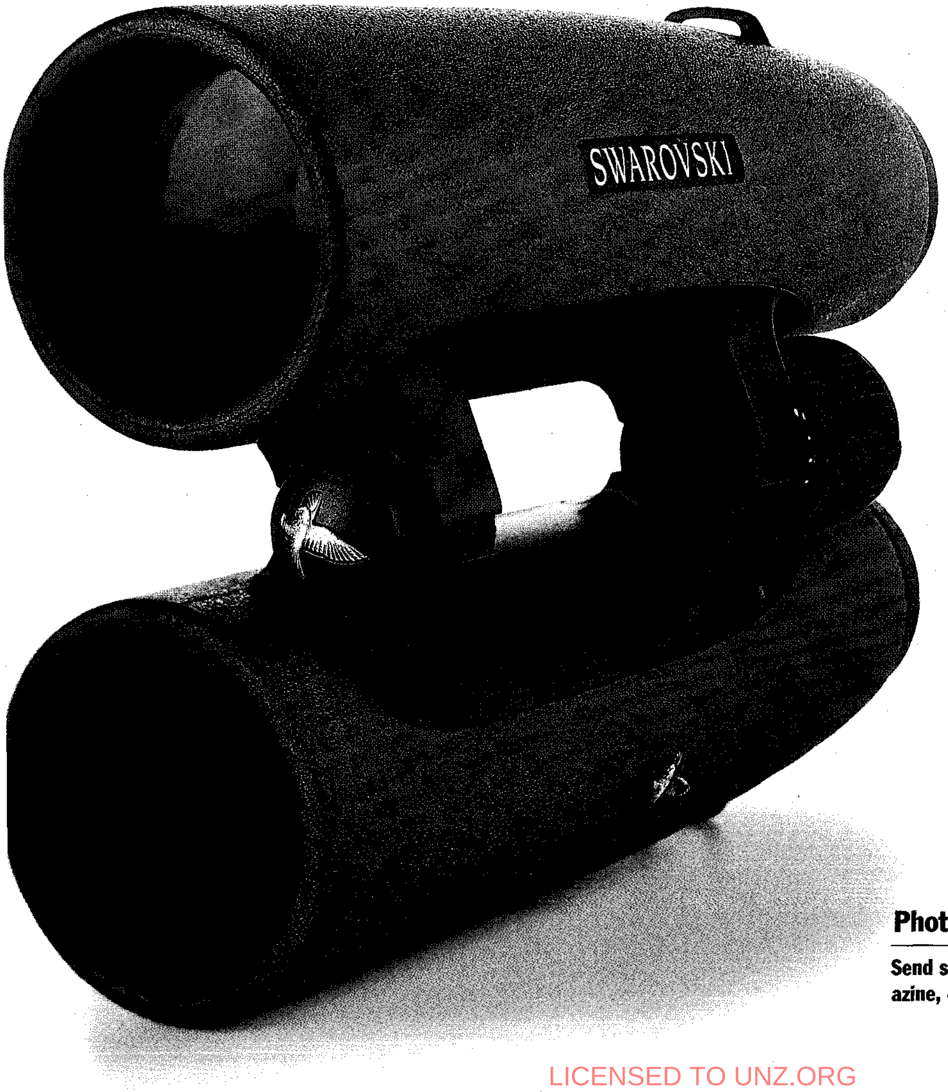
BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

For the Birds

Binoculars with rapid focusing, up-close viewing, sharp resolution, and natural color reproduction (even at dusk) are the stuff of serious birders' dreams. Swarovski's new EL 8.5X42 makes these dreams come true. These glasses are among the first the famed company designed specifically for birding, so Swarovski made sure that they were lightweight and perfectly balanced, with narrow tubes for fast handling, twist-in eye cups for those with glasses, and an extra-wide-angle field of view. And for the klutzy birder, the specs are drop- and waterproof ($1,498).
CLAIRMONT-NICHOLS/*1016 First Avenue, near 55th Street/212-758-2346*



Time Flies

Ladybugs, a gardener's best friend, will offer help of a different kind this summer. Viva Time has mutated them into fetching little clip-on watches (pinch their antennae to reveal the watch face). Never mind their unfortunate Tic-Tic Time Tellers name—these enameled-metal quartz timepieces will be homing in on many a backpack and beach bag ($19.99).
LORD & TAYLOR/*Main floor*

Photographed by Ted Morrison

Send shopping questions to Corky Pollan, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999.

Beach-Blanket Chic

Not content with branding just handbags, mackintoshes, and blouses, now Burberry has given beach towels the logo treatment. This venerable trench-coat house has joined the Vuitton, Chanel, and Missoni ranks and turned its trademarked plaid into a thick and thirsty must-have for depositing that Burberry-bikini-clad body on the sand ($195).

BURBERRY/*9 East 57th Street/212-371-5010*

Danish Mod

H55, a primo source for vintage Scandinavian furniture and *objets,* has just snapped up a cache of Per Lütken vases designed for the Holmegaard Glassworks. This Danish company was founded in 1825, and it's still very much around, producing 2 million bottles a day for the Carlsberg brewery. Lütken was one of Holmegaard's early designers; he created these brilliant handblown vases in the late sixties and named the Pop-inspired series Carnaby after that swingin'-sixties London street ($125 to $350).

H55/*17 Little West 12th Street/Second floor/212-462-4559*

Sleeping Beauties

If the name Liberty of London evokes memories of sweet, flower-strewn cotton blouses, think again. This 125-year-old company has changed its spots, or rather its prints. It's now turning out multi-patterned pajamas in bold color combinations that look more radical Japanese than proper English. The lush softness of the cotton, however, attests to its Liberty lineage ($130).

ABC CARPET & HOME/*888 Broadway, at 19th Street/212-473-3000*

SALES & BARGAINS **SHYAMA PATEL**

The Young Turqs

Aqua culture: *Turquoise is everywhere, from runway to desktop. So don't chase those blues away!* **A user-friendly guide.**

MAYBE THE IMAC STARTED IT. OR IT could have been those old YSL hues at the spring shows. Whatever the reason, turquoise is this season's star color, and we'd bet on these stunners (pictured, right).

The most obvious way to wear turquoise is to mix it with neutrals. Try **Gap**'s tank, **Theory**'s jeans jacket, or **H&M**'s striped top. At night, set off a tan with **Guess?**'s crocheted dress or **NY Based**'s sequined shell. Too much? Try just a bright splash with **Henri Bendel**'s scarves, their teeny **Buzz by Jane Fox** tote, or some glitzy, gilded turquoise jewelry, like **DKNY**'s earrings or **Chan Luu**'s necklace.

Picks of the Week

Susan Lazar has silk dresses, shorts, skirts, and denim—all half off, from $40 to $80. Sizes 4–10. *275 W. 39th St., third floor (212-944-9488); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Thurs. 9:30–5; 6/5–6/8.*

Broadway Panhandler's "yard sale" means up to 70 percent off tons of gadgets and kitchen things. *477 Broome St. (212-966-3434); A.E., M.C., V.; Sat. 11–5; 6/10.*

DKNY and **Donna Karan** for everyone is 40 to 60 percent off: DKNY is up to $250, Donna Karan to $700. *560 Seventh Ave., at 40th St.; A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.–Fri. 8–6:30, Sat. 9–5; 6/6–6/10.*

Metropolitan Design Group is clearing funky home and fashion accessories at less than half price: $5–$100. *80 W. 40th St., eighth floor (212-944-6110); cash only.; Wed.–Thurs. 8–7; 6/7–6/8.*

Theory has chic urban basics for men and women for at least half off, mostly under $200. Sizes XS–L. *261 W. 36th St., second floor (212-947-8748); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon., Tues., Thurs. 10–7, Wed. 8–6, Fri. 10–6, Sat. 10–3; 6/5–6/10.*

Beyond Fashion 2000 has half-price Ralph, Fendi, and more to benefit needy kids. $75 to get in opening night, then $10. *Milk Studios, 450 W. 15th St. (212-677-0345); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed. 6–10, Thurs.–Fri. noon–9, Sat. 10–8, Sun. 11–5; 6/7–6/11.* ■

Pool party: Clockwise from right, Theory jacket, $175 at Saks Fifth Avenue; H&M top, $13 at H&M (212-489-8777); Gap tank, $9.50 at Gap stores; Buzz by Jane Fox bag, $118 at Henri Bendel; scarves, $38 at Henri Bendel; DKNY earrings, $28 at DKNY (212-223-3569); Chan Luu necklace, $80 at Fragments (888-637-2463); NY Based shell, $66 at Saks; Guess? dress, $128 at Guess? SoHo (212-226-9545).

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Photographed by Michael Krauss.

THEATER **JOHN SIMON**

Night of the Living Dead

'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is a beauty-free import from England; Dame Edna, another import, doesn't drag—even the second time around.

MICHAEL BOYD'S ROYAL SHAKESPEARE Company production of **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (seen at BAM) was, as we say in Brooklyn, for the boids. It takes an ineffable combination of fecklessness, tastelessness, and mindlessness to turn this airiest of gossamer fantasies into a gigantic lead balloon that could, dropped from above, flatten out even the wooden head that conceived it. It was Peter Brook, a fine but deluded director, who in 1970 first mounted—under the influence of the baleful Polish theoretician Jan Kott—a *Dream* that was one part Beckett and three parts nonsense. Brook's Athenian wood was a cross between a gymnasium and a loony bin, all magic and poetry banished. But at least Brook could direct and had talented actors. Not so Boyd.

He and his hapless designer begin with a raked platform that is indeed a wooden O, its rear half bordered by a drab wooden wall with five doors in it. The floor sports five trap doors for actors to emerge from incongruously, and numerous holes from which poppies can pop up too ludicrously to be lyrical. I was hoping that when the action shifted to the woods, the wall would revolve to reveal a modicum of enchantment. It remained the same, although some dry ice came crawling in through the doors, and a ladder rose from one of the manholes for Oberon to climb toward Titania's bed suspended in mid-air—a steal from a previous British *Dream* seen here some years back. Later, the ladder sat there unretracted, its fourfold shadow cast on that arena wall on which some actor occasionally perched like a spectator at a corrida. But there was no bullfight, only bull.

Dreary fairies: A provincial Puck and a blowsy Peaseblossom in the RSC's *Dream*.

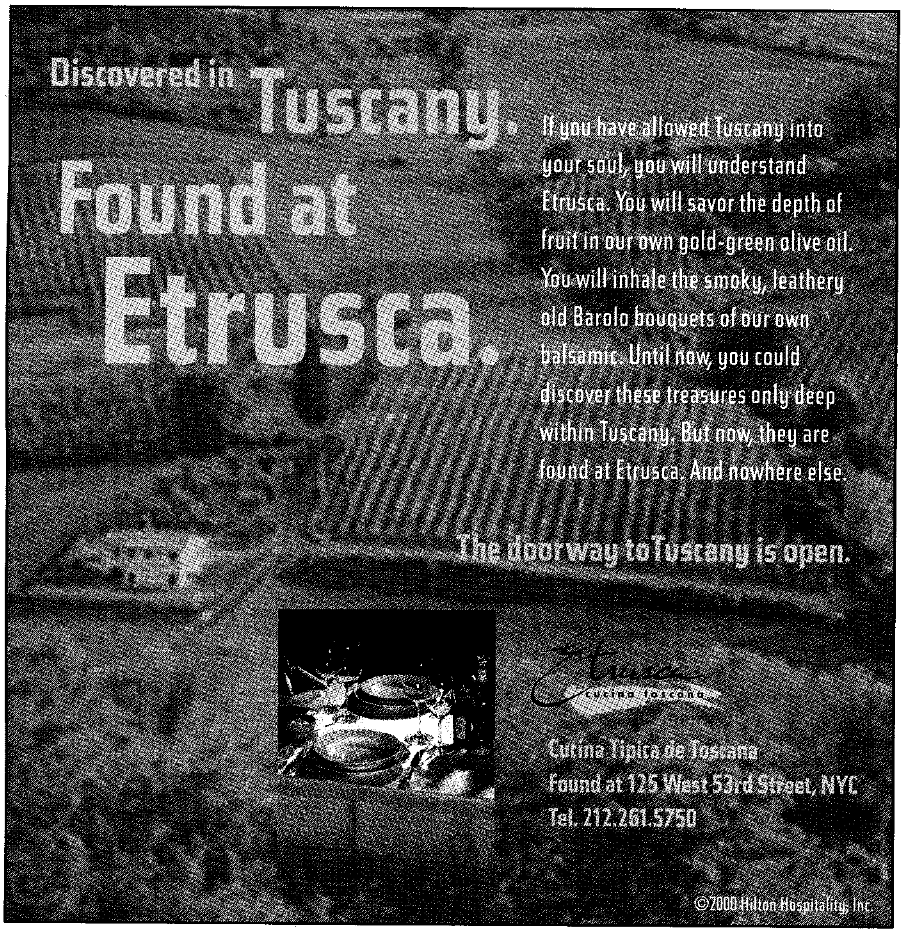
As Boyd directed both the noble Athenians and the fairies to behave like louts, fishwives, or derelicts, the mechanicals (to whom he proclaims the play "a huge hymn of praise") had to be turned, by contrast, into abject imbeciles, whose antics would have made the lowest mountebank retch. (A curious hymn of praise, that.) The one trump card director and players thought they had was bawdy. But what good is bawdy when its purveyors, from low to high, seem unfailingly recruited for their unsightliness, and act like overwrought underachievers or maundering bystanders?

As both Theseus and, identically except for something (seaweed? worms?) on his bald pate, Oberon, the colorless Nicholas Jones suggests a lesser Patrick Stewart, than which I know no fainter praise. As Hippolyta-Titania, the crude and Caribbean-accented, physically unappealing Josette Simon is about as regal as a jittery hand puppet. Puck and Peaseblossom, turned into randy lovers here, were played by actors as gifted and prepossessing as back-country bumpkins. The two Athenian couples were such as even their mothers would have been hard put to love, and the lesser players disappeared into the—yes—woodwork. This magical forest was a lumber yard, with the director the chief blockhead in it.

That the London critics praised this production is shocking enough; that the BAM audiences became more and more noisily enraptured as the goings-on became more nauseating is word-beggaringly pitiful. This *Dream* came to us together with the news of the passing of John Gielgud; I don't know which more clearly betokens the extinction of classical theater in England. (Well, there remain Trevor Nunn at the National and, lurking somewhere, Peter Hall.) In the 1660s, Samuel Pepys, without having experienced what Boyd wrought, called *Dream* in his diary "the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw." Now that's what I call twenty-twenty foresight.

PERHAPS I'VE TAKEN LEAVE OF MY SENSES, BUT I LIKED GLEN Merzer's **Anonymous**. Yes, it is contrived, full of holes, not weird enough to be absurdist but too absurd for mere comedy. Yet think of it as very small new potatoes that with enough butter (good direction) and salt (good acting) make for pleasant fare. Can Harris Harbison, whose three published novels were commercial failures, live off addressing envelopes in his endless spare time? Can Tim, an old friend from Yale days, keep dropping in to

Photograph by Donald Cooper.



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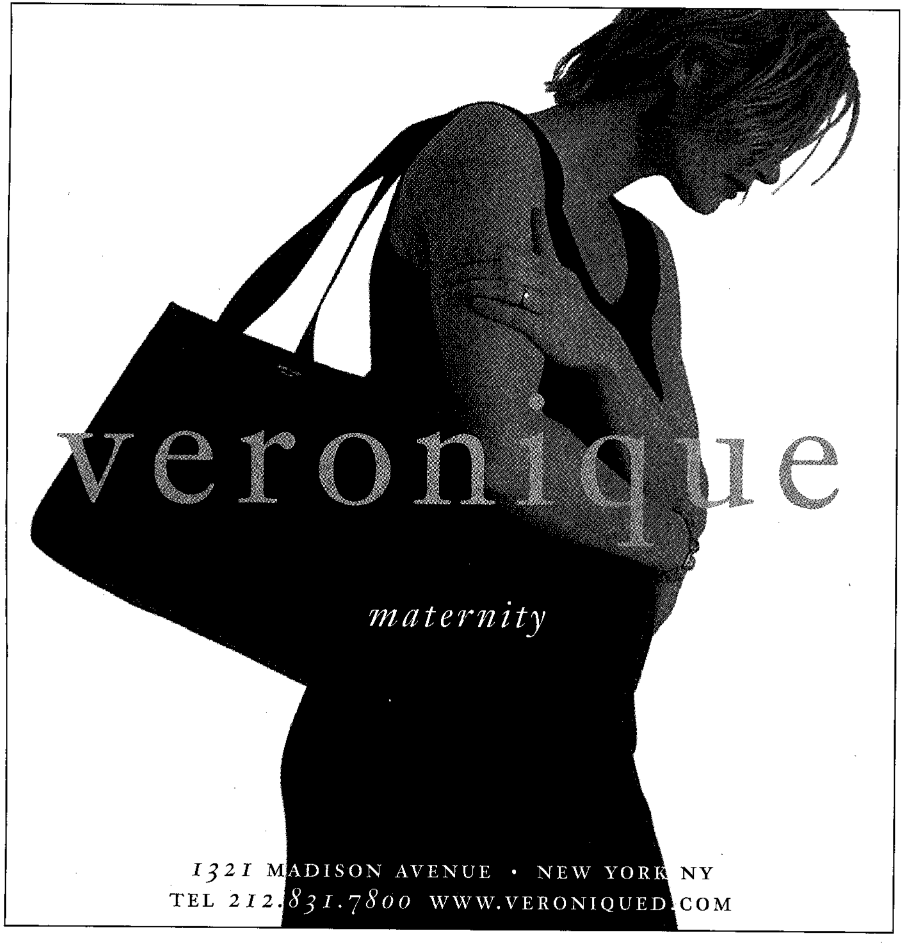

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get away from wife and kids and wolf down Harris's peanut butter, which may be the poor garret-dweller's only sustenance? Can Tim get him a copywriter's job at the ad agency he works for, even though Ed Lustig, who hires him, is insulted by Harris all through the job interview?

Can Ed himself do nothing but play with a ball as he loafs at his desk? Can the unwilling Harris become a huge success in advertising? Can he blissfully make out with Donna, a neurotic, thrice-divorced nutritionist, whom Tim set him up with? Can she send Roy, a big-time mafioso, to him with a hefty novel that needs polishing, a manuscript that "the way it stands, gets in the way of the book . . . slam-bang action, with very little punctuation to slow it down"? (How would Donna know such a mafioso in the first place?) And could Michaela, a simple young mother in Missouri (pronounced *Missoura*), read all three of Harris's novels, write him streams of fan letters, and come by bus to visit him unannounced, her return ticket for the next day already purchased?

I suspect that the answer to all these questions is no, as it may be to the ones raised by the rest of the play. But there is a drollness to it all, a fair number of funny lines (e.g., Harris to the prolix Roy: "I believe in economy of language," to which he replies, "Use as much of that as you want"), a neat construction, a certain teasing ambiguity to all the characters, and a way of making the preposterous slightly plausible.

There is winning work from Chip Zien (Harris), David Arrow (Tim), Betsy Aidem (Donna), Kevin O'Rourke (Lustig), Peter Appel (Roy, particularly grand when interviewed on TV), and Rosemarie DeWitt (as the dopey fan). A wonderfully detailed set by Edward Gianfrancesco and sassy direction by Pamela Berlin do the rest. But I warn you: The colleague sitting behind me had no use whatever for *Anonymous*.

EVEN IF, LIKE ME, YOU HAVE SEEN **Dame Edna: The Royal Tour** before, you should catch it again during these final weeks. Both the stuff you have seen and the considerable new stuff each improvisatory performance necessarily yields will have you in the same stitches. And if, unaccountably, you have abstained so far, rush to make amends. Barry Humphries will make you laugh throughout, and again in later life, whenever you recollect him in laugh-punctured tranquillity, which will be often. And now you also get as a bonus Cady Huffman as one of the Gorgeous Ednaettes, who not only fully lives up to the designation but also, through expressions and gestures, makes a role out of what is merely meant as decoration. ▬

John Simon's 1997–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

ART MARK STEVENS

Past Perfect?

At the Brooklyn Museum, idyllic views of a long-ago New York—where crime and killer mosquitoes were as much a concern as they are today.

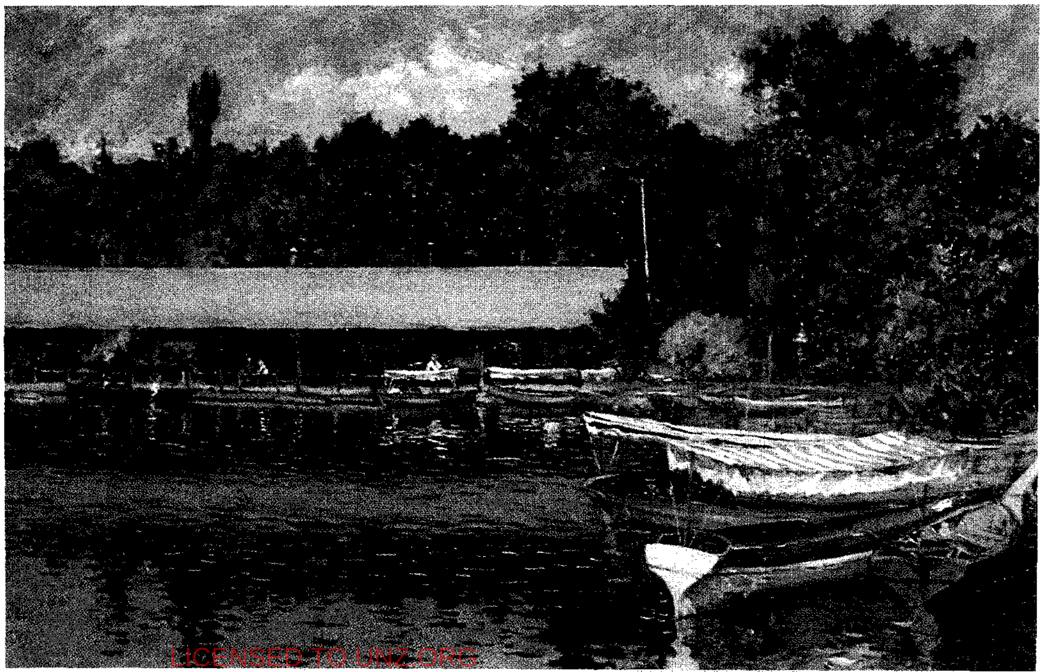
THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART IS STRUGGLING mightily to become "relevant" to both the sophisticated art world of Manhattan and the low- and middle-income communities of Brooklyn. That is not an easy task: The uproar last fall over "Sensation" was enough to make anyone long for the irrelevant. This summer, the museum will temporarily put aside the fractious divisions of the present and instead indulge in quaint dreams of peaceful perfection. In the shows **Maxfield Parrish** and **William Merritt Chase: Modern American Landscapes, 1886–1890**, you will find presented a different Brooklyn and another America. Unless and until you look beneath their pleasant surface.

The Chase exhibition—which was organized by Barbara Dayer Gallati—includes 35 park and seaside scenes, which were painted mostly in Brooklyn and Manhattan. In her research, Gallati has located the exact urban setting for many of these pictures; some that were once thought to depict Prospect Park were actually painted in what was then called Tompkins Park (now Herbert Von King Park). Certain images should give today's New Yorkers a nice shock of recognition: Chase shows the Bethesda Fountain, for example, and the pond in Central Park where children still sail toy boats. These Impressionist park scenes have a certain Parisian aura; they evoke a leafy and carefully trimmed paradise. Viewers may sigh nostalgically, "If only New York today were so lovely," or think, "If only artists today displayed such charm."

In fact, New York was just as tough back then—and the charm of these pictures actually represents a calculated response to tricky struggles over relevance and irrelevance during the late nineteenth century. In the five years covered by the show, Chase (1849–1916) was in the process of updating his art to meet the taste of a changing market. His park and harbor scenes were examples of the new Impressionist look, adopted because it was more fashionable than his earlier old-master panache and because a market was developing in New York for this European style. At the same time, Americans demanded subjects that were "American." Chase therefore chose to depict small slices of life, such as a mother and child sitting in the park or a view of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. But he had to cut the American slice a certain way. As Gallati writes in the catalogue, New York at that time was obsessed with vandalism, the dislocations of immigration, and the threat of disease. Many people thought that the parks, intended to be a picturesque refuge from urban pressures, were a swampy breeding ground for malaria. (Today's obsession with the mosquitoes in Queens is a contemporary echo.) And so Chase's charm came with a moral. In a painting of the Bethesda Fountain, Chase posed an elegant woman dressed in white against the fresh water and sunny air—a symbol of urban health and lily-white purity.

Although a good painter, Chase rarely equaled the best works of Parisian Impressionism. He was not entirely at home in this foreign style; his French had an American accent. There was often something too earnest, literal, and hardworking in the play of his brush. Particularly when painting the figure—or moralizing through his subject matter—he could tighten up and lose the pagan freedoms of the style. The strongest pictures in the show often seem the most tossed-off; they are not painted in order to convey a style or make a point. The best one forgets New York altogether. *Windswept Land, Shinnecock, Long Island* is just a piece of sandy dune. Its planes are firmly built. The discolored light glints with gray.

In the world of Maxfield Parrish, the sky is eternally blue, the brooks never cease to babble, and the girls ripen like peaches in the sun. He seems entirely untroubled by reality, which does not, of course, mean that he was an irrelevant figure. This American illustrator was actually a master of that most relevant of relevancies—dollars and sense. Parrish (1870–1966) knew how to market paradise; he understood that in



Trees grow in Brooklyn: William Merritt Chase's *Boathouse, Prospect Park* (1888).

Photograph courtesy of Brooklyn Museum of Art.

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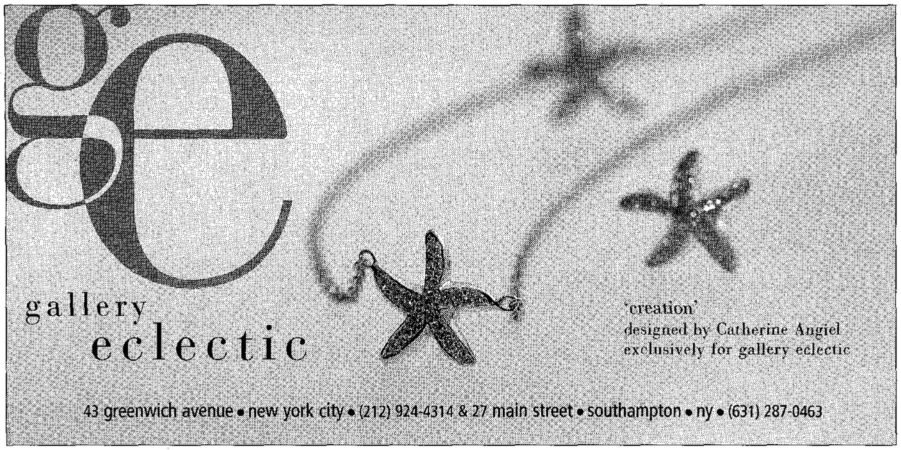
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America the beautiful, innocence sells. During the early thirties, *Ecstasy,* an illustration for the Edison Mazda Lamps Calendar in which a fresh young maiden rapturously greets the dawn as it rises over the mountains, hung in thousands of American homes.

ART

Parrish was a confectioner-craftsman who knew as much about glazes as any American artist of his day. The show in Brooklyn, which was organized by Sylvia Yount of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, contains a large variety of his paintings, prints, and photographs. Parrish designed everything from magazine covers to seed catalogues and chocolate boxes; he was particularly good at illustrating fairy tales. He was entirely clear about his intentions, saying, "I've always considered myself strictly a popular artist," and he never failed to go straight to the sugary heart of his subject. (Being an illustrator means never having to say you're sorry.) As a result, his eye candy provides an interesting view of the escapist dreams and aspirations of mass culture, particularly before World War II. Contrast Parrish with successful illustration today—with the jumpy quickness of MTV or the savvy commercials created for the Super Bowl—and you will see America change before your eyes.

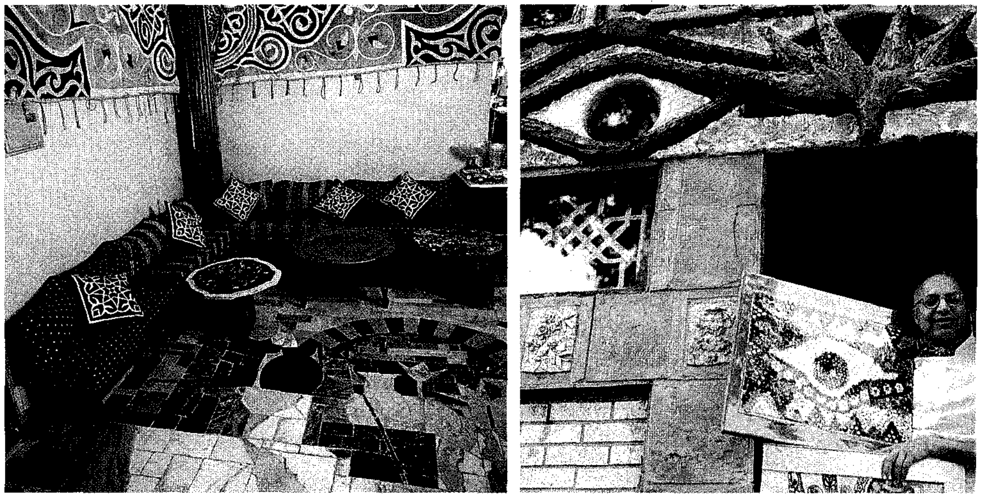
ACCORDING TO **William Edmondson**, THE ANgels told him to begin making the tombstone statuary that's now gathered into an exhibition at the Museum of American Folk Art. And if you have a line to the angels, no other teacher is necessary. Using a hammer, a railroad spike, and blocks of limestone, Edmondson (1874–1951) created a wonderful assortment of animals, birds, preachers, angels, and other notable divinities, such as Eleanor Roosevelt. The son of former slaves, Edmondson would carefully position his statues in the yard around his workshop in Nashville until they seemed comfortable. In the thirties and forties, photographers—among them, Edward Weston—depicted this divine menagerie, and the Museum of Modern Art gave him a show. Edmondson was a minimalist who did just enough to awaken stone, miraculously, to life. He had a gentle and observant wit. In *Bess and Joe,* the two slightly comical figures appear—like certain married couples—to have become one singular creature. His *Angel With a Pocketbook,* in turn, has a determined expression, serious hair, and wings as sturdy as the gates of Heaven. In her pocketbook—which must also be *the* Book—she is obviously bringing you the relevant news. ■

Mark Stevens's 1997–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

THE UNDERGROUND GOURMET **ROB PATRONITE & ROBIN RAISFELD**

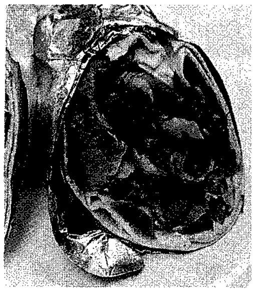
The Dream Nile

In Queens, Moustafa El Sayed's seven-year obsession finally pays off; down in the financial district, the hunt for the ultimate falafel is over.



The hungry eye: Clockwise from top left, the lounge at Mombar; El Sayed displays his art; falafel at Alfanoose.

UNTIL VERY RECENTLY, MOUSTAFA El Sayed has remained in the background of Kabab Cafe, the cramped, convivial Egyptian restaurant he owns with his brother Ali in Astoria. (When Ali's away on one of his frequent eating tours in Argentina or Cuba, Moustafa pinch-hits.) Chalk it up to a career conflict: By day, Moustafa runs a computer-and-copy-machine-repair business. That is, in the spare time when he hasn't been working on his secret project, the seven-year transformation of his storefront office down the street into his very own restaurant, which finally opened in April. An artist at heart, Moustafa single-handedly designed and lovingly built **Mombar** (25-22 Steinway Street), a sort of Alice-in-Arabian-Wonderland social club dedicated to Egyptian clay-pot cookery but named, oddly, for an Egyptian sausage dish. The place is a kaleidoscope of mosaic tiles, each one cut and installed by Moustafa. He raided auctions and demolition sites and even Macy's to find decorative touches like carved wood headboards, U.S. mail chutes, hanging lanterns, an abacus—whatever captured his fever-pitched imagination. Teacups and frying pans protrude from walls; the eight tabletops double as canvases for Moustafa's surrealistic visions of flowers, of eyes peering out from open palms, and of undulating waves of buttons.



It's not only in appearance that Mombar deviates from the pita-pocket fast-food norm. There is no phone number yet (call Kabab Cafe at 718-728-9858 for reservations) or printed menu, and a temporary but forbidding sign taped to the window reads MEMBERS ONLY CONTACT KABAB CAFE. But when we cross the threshold, lured by the scent of cinnamon and some elusive spices, we're greeted warmly: "You're members now," Moustafa says.

Membership requires a willingness to put oneself in the hands of a chef who's as creative with food as he is with paint and plaster. Like his brother, Moustafa is an improvisational cook whose menu changes daily, depending on the season and the market. But where Ali fries and sautées, Moustafa bakes and stews. In place of a menu, Moustafa himself advises you about what he's got in the oven, as if you'd stumbled into a friend's house at dinnertime. No mention is made of price—at least, until the bill arrives. (Expect a choice of about four appetizers and four main courses, in the vicinity of $6 and $17, respectively—a bargain considering the quality of ingredients and Moustafa's sleepless dedication.)

First-timers should sample the meze plate, a good indication of the chef's artistic temperament: No gloppy hodgepodge of spreads and salads, his includes tahini-free hummus and baba ghannouj served daintily smeared on house-baked crackers, ringing neat arrangements of gibneh—a fresh Egyptian cheese blended with oil, spices, and tomatoes—and earthy, oniony ful, a baked-fava-bean concoction native to Egypt.

Egga, a sort of Egyptian frittata veined with spinach and infused with garlic, comes buried beneath a delectable hillock of endive and Swiss chard sautéed in garlic and balsamic vinegar. The platter also holds crackers slathered with a white-eggplant mash, lumpy and seasoned with basil, parsley, and herbs, as well as slices of Bartlett pear layered with pita triangles. With the oven-baked vegetable kibbeh, apple slices provide crisp counterpoint to the grainy bulghur wheat. (Both the El Sayed brothers subscribe to the philosophy of incorporating fresh fruit where you least expect it and dusting plates with sumac or cinnamon.)

The whole fish one night is striped bass, which Moustafa serves with fresh artichoke hearts and red peppers. The flesh is tender and moist, and the garlic-laden sauce enlivens the accompanying red and dill rices, one nutty and firm, the other soft and slippery. Lovely as that bass was, Mombar's raison d'être is the all-encompassing clay pot, which might on any given night be filled with stewed rabbit, with lamb tagine, or with chicken and olives. You get the sense that he is only beginning to explore the possibilities of one-pot cooking, practically guaranteeing something new to taste next time.

Photographed by Magdalena Caris.

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He also has a deft touch with desserts: The baklava and kadayif are subtle, less sweet and honey-drenched than most. He serves his date cake with thick yogurt, roasted pineapple and pears, raisins, strawberries, and mango purée—a happy instance of finding fruit where you most expect and crave it.

INSPIRATION COMES IN MANY FORMS. SOMEtimes, as at Mombar, it appears as a brilliant display of color and texture, an artist's distinctive vision come to life. At **Alfanoose** (150 Fulton Street; 212-349-3622), a nondescript four-month-old falafel joint near Wall Street flanked by $10 discount emporiums, it comes wrapped in foil with a squirt of hot sauce.

This might sound excessive, but the fact is, falafel isn't the no-brainer nosh you (and the operators of all those mediocre street carts) might imagine. Most vendors hastily stuff a flimsy commercial pita pocket till it bursts at the seams before you even dig down deep enough through the assorted roughage to excavate a deep-fried chickpea ball. At Alfanoose, Lebanese co-owner Mouhamad Shami and Syrian chef Jalal Moutraji have their superior system down pat (and the repeat clientele to prove it, including Sullivan Street Bakery's Jim Lahey, who tipped us off): Each crispy falafel, seasoned with but not overpowered by fresh coriander, parsley, onion, garlic, cumin, and pepper, is expertly fried to order, then lined up in a neat row inside an especially thin and pliant pita, which comes from a bakery in Queens—and makes all the difference. Shami gently smushes each ball and then adds sumac-dusted onion salad and pickled cucumbers, beets, and turnips as well as the standard lettuce, tomato, tahini, and optional but essential hot sauce. Then—and this clinches it—the entire production is meticulously rolled up like a burrito, so that all the harmonious components merge in every bite.

Alfanoose is also an excellent source for homemade hummus, ful medames, tabbouleh, baba ghannouj, and mujadara, that wonderful lentil pilaf that comes with either rice or bulghur wheat, both under a blitz of crispy fried onions. We're especially enamored of the vegetarian kibbeh, a bulghur-wheat-and-flour shell encasing a delicate center of chopped Swiss chard, spinach, sesame seeds, and mint, varnished with a lemony, garlicky hot-pepper paste (ask for extra). It's part of what makes Alfanoose, which means "magic lantern" in Arabic, a bright beacon in the barren culinary desert of the financial district. ■

Rob Patronite and Robin Raisfeld's reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

cue

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York

The Soul Man of God, **Al Green**, arrives from Memphis to perform a rare concert in Central Park (page 86)

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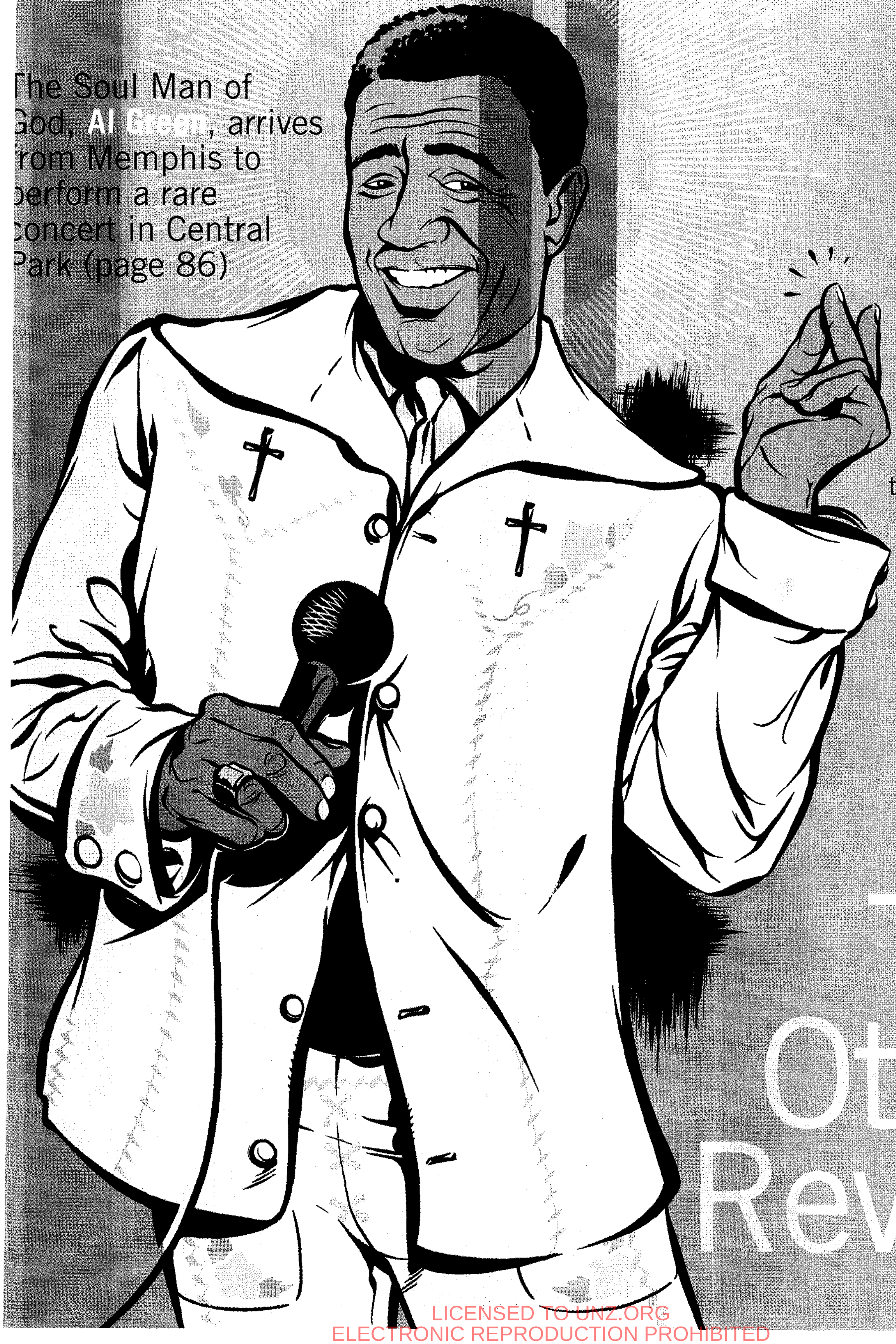


The Other Rev. Al

movies

Sunshine...Rudolph Nureyev...American Pimp

New Films

★**All About My Mother**—Pedro Almodóvar's movie about a mother, magnificently played by Cecilia Roth, who becomes a caregiver to an entire carnival of lost souls is his best in years. It's a heavily sentimentalized vision of femalehood, a cross between Tennessee Williams and Ross Hunter. In Spanish with English subtitles. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) *Cinema Village.*

American Beauty—Kevin Spacey plays a middle-aged zero living out a life of quiet desperation in spic-and-span suburbia with a harridan real-estate-agent wife (Annette Bening) and morose daughter (Thora Birch) who despise him. The film's attempts to turn its characters into more than the sitcom cutouts they essentially are doesn't work. It's like a sportier, homegrown version of all those Antonioni-ish movies about the depleted upper-middle classes zombified by ennui. Sam Mendes, celebrated for his direction of *Cabaret* and *The Blue Room* onstage, makes his movie debut; the script is by Alan Ball. (Rainer; 9/20/99) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

American Psycho—Christian Bale plays the designer serial killer and Wall Street hotshot Patrick Bateman in this overconceptualized movie adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis's controversial, overconceptualized novel. Director Mary Harron has done an admirable job paring down Ellis's numbing catalogue of conspicuous consumptions, and the film is less gory than the book. The movie comes across as a classy slasher flick. (4/24/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *The Screening Room; Loews State.*

Battlefield Earth—Based on an L. Ron Hubbard novel and starring Scientologist John Travolta, this sci-fi adventure takes place in the year 3000, by which time the earth will be colonized by mineral-consuming aliens. (1 hr. 57 mins.; PG-13) *Concourse Plaza; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Better Living Through Circuitry—Jon Reiss's exhaustive feature-length documentary covers the last ten years of rave culture, and is chock-full of rowdy party footage and even more drawn-out interviews with hipsters like Superstar D.J. Keoki and Psychic TV's Genesis P-Orridge. (NR) *Cinema Village.*

The Big Kahuna—Kevin Spacey, Danny De Vito, and Peter Facinelli are industrial-lubricant salesmen holed up in a Wichita hospitality suite in this okay adaption of a play by Roger Rueff. The acting is sharp, but isn't it about time American playwrights gave this salesman-as-metaphor-for-just-about-everything shtick a rest? (Rainer; 5/8/00) (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's 59th Street East; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Big Momma's House—*The Nutty Professor* meets...*The Nutty Professor* in this Martin Lawrence vehicle, which finds the would-be funnyman playing an FBI agent who has to dress up as a big, fat, southern grandmother in order to nab some evil-doing crooks. *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Clearview's Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas.*

Bossa Nova—The music and the scenery are as important as any of the situations involving Amy Irving and her Portuguese-speaking supporting cast in a comedy about mostly middle-aged singles looking for sex and love. In Portuguese, with subtitles, and English. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

But I'm a Cheerleader—Megan (Natasha Lyonne) is a popular high-school student whose friends and parents start suspecting she's a lesbian because of her vegetarianism and the fact that she doesn't like kissing her boyfriend. An out-of-drag RuPaul co-stars as a treatment director who's called in to rehabilitate her. *Opens 6/7.*

Center Stage—*The Madness of King George* director Nicholas Hytner turns out this story about the aspirations of young ballet students vying for a place in a prestigious dance company, starring Amanda Schull as a determined ballerina. (1 hr. 53 mins.; PG-13) *Loews 19th St. East; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square; Clearview's Cobble Hill; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Opening

Darkness and Light

It's a miracle that *Sunshine* ever saw the light of day. A three-hour epic charting three generations of one Hungarian-Jewish family, the film begins with the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire and ends nearly a century and two world wars later with the collapse of Communism. Istvan Szábó's original script was 600 pages—a ten-hour film, if anyone had tried shooting it as written. "I imagine Szábó *still* thinks it's too short," says playwright Israel Horovitz, who took on the unenviable task of turning that screenplay into a shootable work for the acclaimed director of *Mephisto* and *Colonel Redl*. "Szábó basically wanted to film the history of Hungary," Horovitz recalls, "and I came in and said, 'Let's not do that; let's do the history of the family instead.' We fought about it." Their happy compromise is a film that has the breadth of Bertolucci's *1900* but the focus and intimacy of a family saga. Woven into it are two stunning conceits: First, Ralph Fiennes deftly plays the three men central to the story of the Sonnenschein clan: the film's narrator, Ivan, as well as his father and grandfather, each intent in his own futile way on assimilating into the Hungarian mainstream. Second, Szábó cast Jennifer Ehle (pictured, with Fiennes) as the young Valerie Sonnenschein, a headstrong lover and wife; later, when Valerie is the transcendant family matriarch, she is played by Ehle's mother, Julie Harris. The unorthodox casting only adds to the film's often shocking resonances. "With *Sunshine*, I wanted to explore questions of identity," Szábó says in a phone conversation from his native Budapest. "What happens when a person cuts off their roots in order to enter into society." As a Jewish-American playwright, Horovitz has often grappled with those issues in his own work. "American Jews think they've got a problem—but they were miles away from it," he says. "When you get behind the European sensibility, you start to understand. High-profile directors in Paris who've changed their names to something like O'Connor will come up to me and whisper, 'I'm Jewish, too.' European Jews are still scared the Nazis will come back." *Sunshine* opens June 9.

DEREK DE KOFF

'CUE' COVER ILLUSTRATION BY HOUSE INDUSTRIES

The Cider House Rules—Michael Caine, Delroy Lindo, and Tobey Maguire star in Lasse Hallström's sweet coming-of-ager, based on the novel by John Irving. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; PG-13) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

Cinéma Vérite: Defining the Moment—Peter Wintonick's film—part road movie, part history, and part homage—is a documentary about documentaries, examining some of the century's finest nonfiction films. (1 hr. 42 mins.; NR). *Opens 6/9.*

Cirque du Soleil Journey of Man—The breathtaking acrobatics of this world-famous troupe come to town in the form of an enormous 3-D movie, which interprets the entire history of humanity using gymnasts and trapezes. (45 mins.; G) *Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

★**Croupier**—Mike Hodges, the much underrated English director, teams with screenwriter Paul Mayersberg in this sharp, cool drama about a would-be novelist, smashingly played by Clive Owen, who works as a croupier in a posh London casino. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 29 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

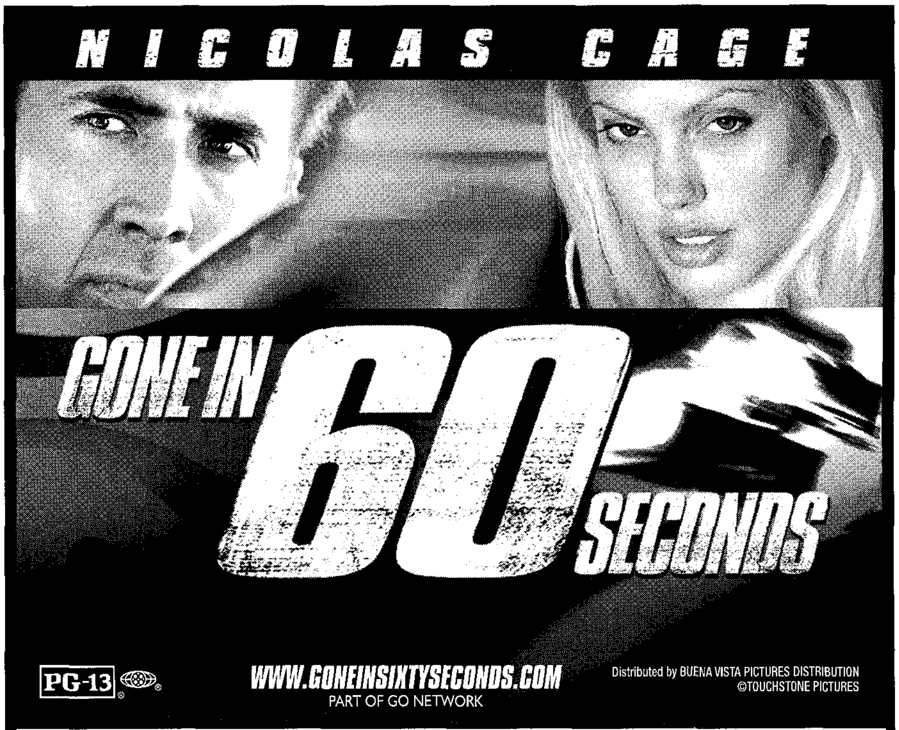
Dinosaur—This latest Disney animated feature uses digital techniques against mostly live-action backdrops, and the cost of the whole shebang is said to top $140 million. The visual expressiveness of the dinos is expert, but the script is the usual homiletic Disney dishwater. Thankfully, it's not a musical. May be too scary for little kids. (5/29/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG) *Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Clearview's Olympia; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie**—Much has been written about this Luis Buñuel film as a surrealist jape, but just a look at one of its dream sequences reveals a master disturber at work. (Rainer; 5/22/00) (NR). *Quad Cinemas; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**East Is East**—The great Indian actor Om Puri towers in this jagged, well-made comedy about a Pakistani father in England trying to cope with his unruly family and his own fundamentalist ways. It could have come across as a mixed-race *Life With Father*, but the complexity of Puri's performance transforms it. (4/24/00) (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Crown Gotham; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★**East-West**—A hokey, melodramatic, enjoyable Cold War drama from France about a Russian émigré physician (Oleg Menchikov) who returns to Stalin's postwar police state with his French wife (Sandrine Bonnaire) and pays the price. Catherine Deneuve plays the French actress who helps save the day, and her cheekbones and lip gloss have never seemed so politically correct. In French and Russian with English subtitles. (2 hrs. 5 mins.; NR) *Paris Theatre; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

8½ Women—Peter Greenaway's homage to Fellini involves a father and son who, after watching *8½*, transform their estate into a bordello and immediately embark upon numerous sexual es-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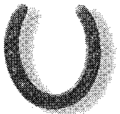

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capades. (2 hrs.; NR) *Cinema Village; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Erin Brockovich—Julia Roberts plays a high-heeled, cleavage-enhanced, tough-talking, sparsely educated, twice-divorced mother of three who also spearheads an investigation leading to the largest payoff ever made in a direct-action lawsuit in this intermittently enjoyable crusading-underdog movie directed by Steven Soderbergh. For a while, it promises to be something more than conventional; it has a nice, uncondescending feel for the little moments that make up little lives. Albert Finney plays the lawyer who is also Erin's foil, and his underplaying is a boon amid all the posturing and righteousness on display. (Rainer; 3/27/00) (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Loews 72nd St. East; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

The Filth and the Fury—Julien Temple creates yet another documentary about the Sex Pistols, this time without letting Malcolm McLaren take all the credit. New concert footage and an interview with Sid and Nancy, may they rest in peace. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Film Forum.*

Final Destination—A young man gets a premonition and tells his friends that their plane is going to crash. They don't get on, but they die anyway. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Whitestone; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas—Prequels being all the rage, the Flintstones take us back to Fred and Barney's youth, when they were courting their future wives. Mark Addy and Stephen Baldwin star as Fred and Barney, respectively. Features Alan Cumming in dual roles. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG) *Clearview's 59th Street East; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Frequency—Jim Caviezal plays a Queens cop who, courtesy of a rip in the space-time continuum and an old ham radio, communicates with his firefighter father (Dennis Quaid), who perished in a blaze in 1969. The radio isn't the only thing that's ham in this misguided hunk of heartfelt mumbo-jumbo. (Rainer; 5/8/ 00) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Sutton; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

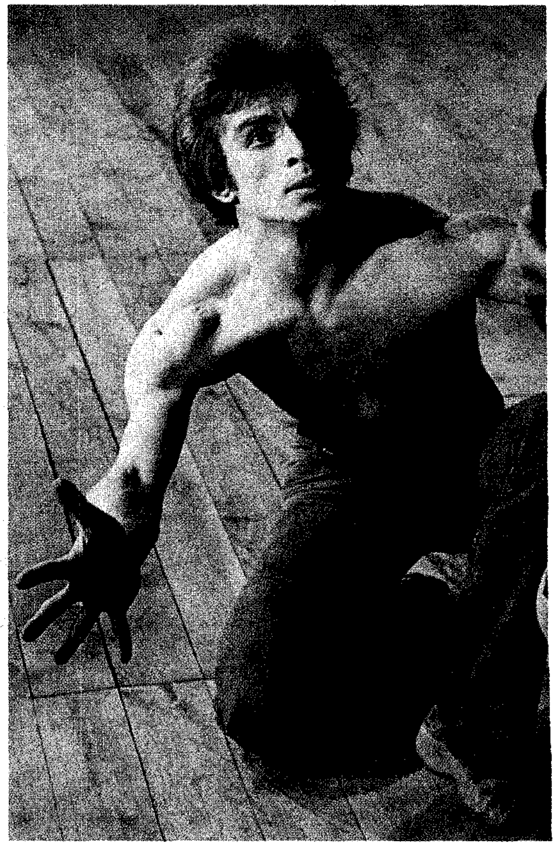
Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai—Forest Whitaker gives a resonant and affecting performance as a hit man who pores over ancient samurai texts in this allusive Jim Jarmusch movie that is by turns irritating and inviting. (Rainer; 3/20/00) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

★**Gladiator**—Ridley Scott's latest is an attempt to make a Roman epic on the scale of *Spartacus* or *Ben-Hur* while, at the same time, presenting us with a hero, Russell Crowe's Maximus, who is monumentally withdrawn. Crowe's intensity holds the film together. As the Roman general who becomes a slave and then a gladiator and a folk hero, he radiates a force-field thicker than any armor. Richard Harris, Joaquin Phoenix, and, in his last role, Oliver Reed contribute some entertaining moments. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Loews Astor Plaza; Loews Coronet; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Gone in Sixty Seconds—Nicholas Cage stars in this update of the 1974 classic about a thief who has to pull off one final heist—stealing 100 cars—in order to save his younger brother's life. (PG-13). *Opens 6/9.*

Festivals
Flash Dancer

Most remember the last phase of Rudolph Nureyev's life—the sweeping mink coats, the appalling film performances (i.e., James Toback's 'Exposed'), and the ravagement by AIDS that ended with his death in 1993. It's easy to forget that for several decades the staggeringly beautiful Russian was considered the supreme ballet dancer of his time. This weekend, the Film Society of Lincoln Center celebrates the work and the life with "This Is Nureyev! A Weekend of Dance on Film," a five-film showcase. From June 9 to June 11.



Photograph by Jurgen Vollmer/Robert Gable Collection.

Grass—Woody Harrelson narrates this rather hilarious examination of the U.S. Government's anti-marijuana crusade, bringing together loads of bizarre newsreels linking pot to heroin, murder, rape, and even Communism. (NR; 80 mins.) *Film Forum.*

Groove —The latest in a way too long line of films chroncling the saucy lifestyle of E-popping ravers. This one, starring Lola Glaudini, Hamish Linklater, and Denny Kirkwood, follows the various drug-induced revelations of its glowstick-twirling, pacifier-sucking anti-heroes. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R). *Opens 6/9.*

★**Hamlet**—Michael Amereyda's overconceptualized nouveau version of Shakespeare's high-body-count classic is set in a present-day fortresslike New York and features the youngest and most grad-student-ish Hamlet in memory, affectingly played by Ethan Hawke. Streamlined and clotted with references to our consumerist media culture, Denmark here is Denmark Corp. The film is notable mostly for its occasional daring and for some of the performers, including Diane Venora (Gertrude), Sam Shepard (the Ghost), Liev Schreiber (Laertes), and, yes, Bill Murray (Polonius). (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Held Up—Expect plenty of outdated *Deliverance*-style gags in this fish-out-of-water story starring Jamie Foxx as a Chicago businessman held hostage in a southwest convenience store. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG-13) *Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

★**High Fidelity**—John Cusack is the owner of a retro record store in Chicago whose girlfriend (Iben Hjejle) has just walked out on him, in this raffish, highly entertaining comedy directed by Stephen Frears. It's one of the few comedies around that really get into the way men try to make sense of themselves. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *CC Village East; Loews 19th St. East; CC Eastside Playhouse.*

I Dreamed of Africa—The African continent, with its sun-baked earth tones, goes well with Kim Basinger's lily-of-the-valley loveliness in this spacious, lackadaisical swatch of inspirationalism about real-life Kuki Gallman, who, with her husband and young son, left a life of privilege in Venice for the poetic hardships of Kenya. Tragedy ensues. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (1 hr. 52 mins.; PG-13) *UA Gemini.*

Kikujiro—A 9-year-old boy (Takeshi Kitano) goes in search of the mother he's never met, and in turn forms an unexpected friendship with a street thug ("Beat" Takeshi Kitano, who also directs). (1 hr. 56 mins.; PG-13) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Love and Basketball—First-time writer-director Gina Prince-Bythewood's movie is about a girl ball player (Sanaa Lathan) and her on-again-off-again romance with the star player (Omar Epps), with whom she grew up. Most of it is mawkishly heartfelt, but Lathan gives a performance that seems lit from within. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (2 hrs. 6 mins.; PG-13) *Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Bay Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

The Love Machine—This low-budget mockumentary about an adult Website at NYU and the amateur reporter bent on exposing its users' secret takes *Sex, Lies and Videotape* into *Blair Witch* territory ("Is it real? Is it fiction?") while updating the eighties exposé for the electronic age. (1 hr. 23 mins.; NR). *Two Boots Pioneer.*

Luminous Motion—In this bizarre black comedy, a 10-year-old boy (Eric Lloyd) and his booze-drenched, wallet-swiping mother (Deborah Kara Unger) have the time of their lives motel-hopping through life in a beat-up Chevy—until Mom catches the eye of a Coors-swilling carpenter. Murderous Oedipal peccadilloes ensue. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

Mission: Impossible 2—Tom Cruise is back in this James Bond–ish sequel with mythic overtones courtesy of director John Woo. The mythologizing, the slo-mo ceremoniousness of the action scenes, the hero/villain dualisms, the flutterings of doves aren't really supported by the mostly standard-issue thriller-movie tropes. Cruise is

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

pretty much the whole show, and he's all business. The humorlessness of the enterprise, and of his performance, is wearing. Thandie Newton co-stars as the love interest, and she's touching without having much more to do than your average Bond girl. (Rainer; 6/5/00) (2 hrs. 6 mins.; PG-13) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Passion of Mind—Demi Moore plays a woman with alternate identities. One is real; one is a dream. How can you differentiate them? One persona is a New York literary agent, tense, childless; the other is an earth mother in Provence who reviews books for the *Times.* The two halves of her life are equally dull, in different styles of dullness, with matching dull performances. (Rainer; 6/5/00) *UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Pop & Me—Just in time for Father's Day comes first-time filmmaker Chris Roe's documentary about traveling around the world for six months with his dad, Richard. The saga, which won top honors at the L.A. Independent Film Festival, examines cultural, religious, and lifestyle differences within various father-son relationships. *Opens 6/9.*

The Road to El Dorado—Dreamworks' animated movie has some thrilling, swoopy visual sequences, lots of corn, and enough shimmering gold surfaces to make you think the Yucatan is an adjunct of Trump Tower. Actors voicing the animated characters include Kenneth Branagh, Kevin Kline, and, unmistakably, Rosie Perez. (Rainer; 4/10/00) (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

Road Trip—A raunchy comedy that aims, apparently, to outdo *American Pie* finds four friends traveling 1,800 miles in search of a smutty videotape accidentally mailed to one of their girlfriends. Co-stars Beckin Meyer, Tom Green, and Andy Dick. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Loews Village; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza.*

Romeo Must Die—Hong Kong film veteran Jet Li is an ex-cop looking to avenge his little brother's murder in gang-torn Oakland. Li hooks up with pop star Aaliyah in her film debut as the rival gang leader's daughter in this hi-fi action flick based loosely on *Romeo and Juliet.* (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Loews State.*

Rules of Engagement—In yet another movie about military discipline, a colonel turned lawyer played by Tommy Lee Jones must defend his friend (Samuel Jackson), who saved his life in Vietnam but is now accused of killing civilian demonstrators. (2 hrs. 3 mins.; R) *Loews State.*

Screwed—Norm Macdonald is a bitter chauffeur who, with his best friend (Dave Chappelle), plans to kidnap his boss's dog. But when the pet escapes and returns to her, she thinks her driver's the one who's been kidnapped. Lots of violent slapstick. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Shadow Boxers—This documentary on women boxers focuses on Lucia Rijker, a Dutch-Indonesian athlete who defies most stereotypes about the sport. (1 hr. 12 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Shanghai Noon—Director Tom Dey attempts to make a wacky Western by casting Jackie Chan as a klutzy Imperial Guard to the Emperor of China who's trying to rescue a kidnapped princess, with the help of a petty thief–big dreamer (Owen Wilson). (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Art Greenwich Twin; UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Sutton; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Shower—A surprisingly bittersweet examination of Chinese culture that takes place in a public bathhouse that's about to be closed down by a young entrepreneur—who just happens to be the son of the man who owns it. (1 hr. 32 mins.; PG-13). *Opens 6/9.*

The Skulls—*Dawson's Creek* star Joshua Jackson plays a New Haven townie who gets accepted to Yale—which is good—and then joins a secret, elitist fraternity, which is bad. Very bad. (PG-13) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

Small Time Crooks—Woody Allen's new movie isn't just minor, it's minuscule. It hearkens back not to the early classics like *Bananas* and *Sleeper* but even further back to the milquetoast humors of *Take the Money and Run.* Allen and Tracey Ullman are a working-class Manhattan couple on the shady side of the law who strike it rich. Allen plays up the comedy of nouveau riche bad taste, but his comic affinities are elsewhere; most of what we see here is labored. Best reason to go: Elaine May's marvelous turn as a holy-fool dimwit. (Rainer; 5/29/00) (PG-13) *CC Village East; UA Union Square; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Beekman; UA East; Sony Lincoln Square; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Marboro; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Time Code—Mike Figgis's movie utilizes state-of-the-art digital video camera technology to tell four separate, related stories, all shot in one take and projected onto a screen split into four panels. The result is less aesthetic breakthrough than stunt. Despite the cast, which includes Stellan Skarsgård, Saffron Burrows, and Salma Hayek, the black-comedy plots wouldn't be especially worth watching on one screen, let alone four. (Rainer; 5/8/00) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

28 Days—Sandra Bullock is a pill-popping alcoholic who, after ruining her sister's wedding while sloshed, is sentenced to a touchy-feely rehab center. But what about her pill-popping alcoholic boyfriend? (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

★**U-571**—Jonathan Mostow's WWII sub thriller is engagingly old-fashioned. Matthew McConaughey is the lieutenant who commandeers the takeover of a German U-boat in order to seize a coding machine called the Enigma. Harvey Keitel and Bill Paxton also turn up in uniform. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (2 hrs. ; PG-13) *UA Union Square; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay.*

Up at the Villa—Enervated adaptation of the Somerset Maugham novella about murder and romance set in Fascist Tuscany and starring Sean Penn and Kristin Scott Thomas as unlikely conspirators. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (1 hr. 55 mins.; PG-13) *Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Crossbay.*

The Virgin Suicides—The material—five suburban adolescent girls kill themselves off, poetically, inexplicably—is perhaps too woozy for the rueful, mythological treatment it gets here, but debut director Sofia Coppola has a fine, fresh eye and a way with actors, among them Kirsten Dunst, James Woods, and Kathleen Turner. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews State; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Art Greenwich Twin—97–101 Greenwich Ave., at W. 12th St. (212-929-3350) *Gladiator; Shanghai Noon.*

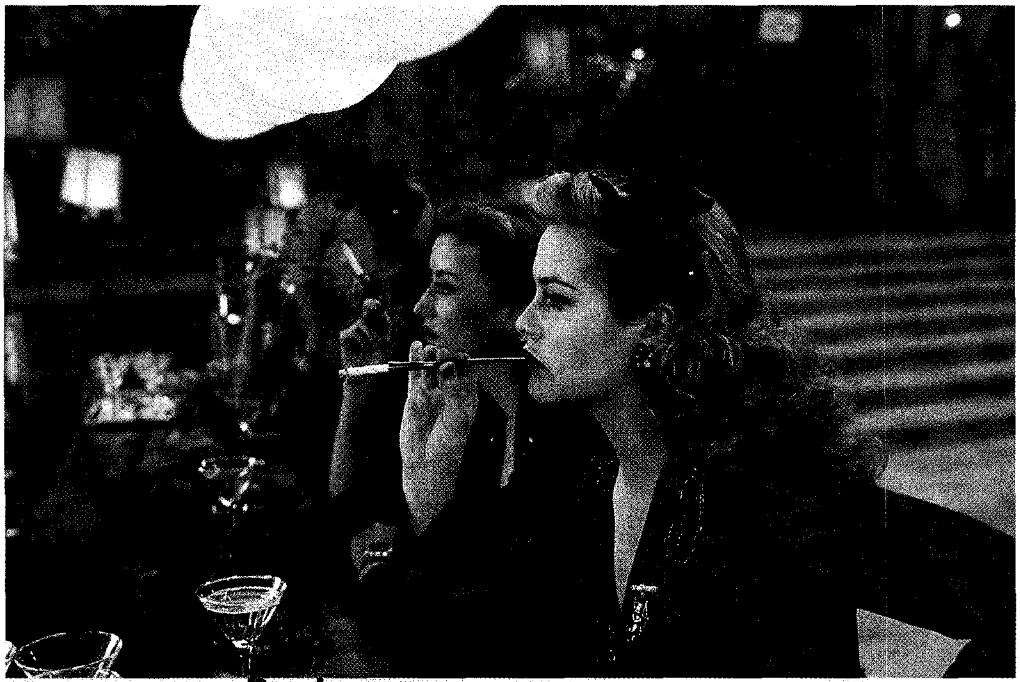
CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) *East Is East; Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai; Hamlet; Luminous Motion; Time Code.*

CC Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (212-529-6799) *Big Momma's House; High Fidelity; Small Time Crooks.*

Opening Bad Boys

If you can't wait until *Shaft 2000* hits theaters, the Blaxploitation renaissance ramps up this week with *American Pimp*, a documentary directed by the Hughes brothers. (*Menace II Society* was pretty good, but what was up with *Dead Presidents*?) Expect plenty of white, Blockbuster-employed Tarantino wannabes on opening night, eager to brush up on their ho's and bitches. Opens June 9 at Cinema Village.

Photograph courtesy of Seventh Art Releasing.



Preview
Shakes the Clown

Next up in the seemingly endless barrage of Shakespearean updates (Ethan Hawke in a contempo 'Hamlet'? Did that really happen, or did we perchance just dream it?) is Kenneth Branagh's 'Love's Labour's Lost,' which transplants the romantic comedy to a thirties Hollywood crawling with whisky-slugging ingenues, more Cole Porter numbers than there were in 'Anything Goes,' and Alicia Silverstone (pictured, foreground, with Natascha McElhone, Carmen Ejogo, and Emily Mortimer) reciting lines like "O poverty in wit, kingly-poor flout!" Opens June 9.

Cinema Village—22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) *8 1/2 Women; All About My Mother; Better Living Through Circuitry; Shadow Boxers.*

Clearview's Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (777-FILM#603) *Dinosaur; Frequency.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) *Grass; The Filth and the Fury.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Loews Village—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (50-LOEWS#952) *Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; The Virgin Suicides.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) *Bossa Nova; Croupier; Kikujiro; The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal)(212-334-2100) *American Psycho.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway(212-253-2225) *Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Passion of Mind; Shanghai Noon; Small Time Crooks; The Big Kahuna; U-571.*

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) *Big Momma's House; Passion of Mind; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *Dinosaur; Gladiator; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; The Virgin Suicides.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *Big Momma's House.*

Loews 19th St. East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (50-LOEWS#858) *Center Stage; High Fidelity; Mission: Impossible 2; Small Time Crooks.*

Loews Kips Bay Theatre—570 Second Ave. (505-6397#558) *Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Small Time Crooks.*

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) *Dinosaur; Hamlet; Keeping the Faith.*

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) *East Is East.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) *High Fidelity.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) *Frequency; Shanghai Noon.*

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-FILM#615) *The Big Kahuna; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *Gladiator.*

CO Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *28 Days; American Beauty; Boiler Room; The Cider House Rules; Return to Me; The Skulls; Snow Day; The Road to El Dorado.*

Loews 42nd Street E Walk—42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#572) *Final Destination; Love and Basketball; Mission: Impossible 2; Shanghai Noon; Small Time Crooks.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#699) *Gladiator.*

Loews Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Gladiator.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (50-LOEWS#901) *American Psycho; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; The Virgin Suicides.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) *East-West.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East—210 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#763) *Dinosaur; Frequency; Keeping the Faith; Shanghai Noon.*

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *Small Time Crooks.*

Clearview's First & 62nd St.—400 E. 62nd St. (777-FILM#957) *Bossa Nova; Croupier; Road Trip; The Virgin Suicides; U-571; Up at the Villa.*

Clearview's Park and 86th St.—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Big Momma's House.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (50-LOEWS#704) *Erin Brockovich.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (50-LOEWS#698) *Mission: Impossible 2.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (50-LOEWS#964) *Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) *Small Time Crooks.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) *Center Stage; I Dreamed of Africa; Passion of Mind.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *Big Momma's House.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *Big Momma's House; Mission: Impossible 2.*

Clearview's Olympia—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *Dinosaur; Gladiator.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) *Bossa Nova; Croupier; East Is East; Hamlet; Kikujiro; The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie; Up at the Villa.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (50-LOEWS#701) *Mission: Impossible 2.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) *Big Momma's House; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Shanghai Noon.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (50-LOEWS#638) *Center Stage; Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Passion of Mind; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; Small Time Crooks.*

Bronx

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (777-FILM#833) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Love and Basketball; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) *Battlefield Earth; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Final Destination; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770) *8 1/2 Women; East Is East; The Virgin Suicides.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) *Boys Don't Cry; The Cup; Rules of Engagement; The Road to El Dorado.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Mission: Impossible 2.*

Clearview's Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (718-596-9113) *Center Stage; Dinosaur; Road Trip; Small Time Crooks; The Big Kahuna.*

Photograph by Laurie Sparham.

CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) *Big Momma's House; Mission: Impossible 2; Shanghai Noon.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Held Up; Love and Basketball; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Pavilion—188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; Small Time Crooks.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) *Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) *Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Small Time Crooks.*

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) *Battlefield Earth; Center Stage; Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; U-571.*

Queens

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) *Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

College Point Multiplex—28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) *Big Momma's House; Mission: Impossible 2; Shanghai Noon.*

Kaufman Astoria Cinema—38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) *Cirque du Soleil Journey of Man; Dinosaur; Final Destination; Frequency; Mission: Impossible 2; Screwed; Small Time Crooks; The Big Kahuna; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Virgin Suicides.*

Kew Gardens Cinemas—81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) *Croupier; East Is East; East-West; Erin Brockovich; The Big Kahuna; Up at the Villa.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; My Dog Skip; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) *East-West; Kadosh; Up at the Villa.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) *Dinosaur; Mission: Impossible 2.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (777-FILM#712) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (777-FILM#733) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (777-FILM#735) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) *Battlefield Earth; Center Stage; Gladiator; Road Trip; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

UA Brandon Cinema—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) *Center Stage; Small Time Crooks.*

UA Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) *Gladiator; Shanghai Noon; Up at the Villa.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) *Battlefield Earth; Center Stage; Dinosaur; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) *Battlefield Earth; Gladiator; Road Trip; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; Time Code; Where the Heart Is.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) *Center Stage; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) *Battlefield Earth; Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Small Time Crooks.*

Staten Island

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) *Big Momma's House; Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon; Small Time Crooks; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) *Dinosaur; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Road Trip; Shanghai Noon.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) *Battlefield Earth; Center Stage; Dinosaur; Frequency; Gladiator; Mission: Impossible 2; Shanghai Noon; Small Time Crooks; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—Through 6/25: "*The Sopranos:* The First Two Seasons." 6/10: *The Sopranos*, Episodes 9–12. 6/11: *The Sopranos*, Episodes 13–16. 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free.

Anthology Film Archives—Sam Peckinpah Retrospective. 6/8: *The Getaway* (1972); *Straw Dogs* (1969). 6/9: *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia* (1971); *The Wild Bunch* (1969). 6/10: *The Getaway; Straw Dogs.* 6/11: *The Wild Bunch; The Getaway; Straw Dogs*. 32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8.

BAM Rose Cinemas—6/8 and 6/9: *Raising Arizona* (1987). Opening 6/10: "*Village Voice* Best of the Nineties." 6/10: *Safe* (1995). 6/11: *Breaking the Waves* (1996). 6/12: *M*A*S*H* (1970). 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770).

Film Forum—"Sapph-O-Rama!" 6/6: *All Over Me* (1997); *High Art* (1998). 6/7: *Born in Flames* (1983); *Working Girls* (1986). 6/8: *Heavenly Creatures* (1994); *Butterfly Kiss* (1995). 6/9: *Bound* (1996); *French Twist* (1995). 6/10: *The Killing of Sister George* (1968). 6/11: *The Fox* (1968). 6/4: *Therese and Isabelle* (1967). 209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); $9.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—Opening 6/9: "This Is Nureyev! A Weekend of Dance." 6/9: *I Am a Dancer* (1972); *Romeo and Juliet* (1965); *Don Quixote* (1972); mixed bill. 6/10: *I Am a Dancer; Don Quixote;* mixed bill. 6/11: *Don Quixote; Romeo and Juliet;* mixed bill. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); $8.50, $5 for members, $4.50 seniors, $3 "Movies for Kids."

The New School—Through 6/11: The Twelfth Annual New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. 6/6: *Advice From a Caterpillar* (2000); *Apostles of Civilised Vice*; *Get Your Stuff* (2000); 6/7: *The Attack of the Giant Moussaka* (1999). 6/8: *...But I Was a Girl: The Story of Freida Belinfante* (1998); *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me* (2000); *The Bradford Tour America* (1999); *Women in Black* (1999); *Journey to a Hate Free Millennium: Stories of Compassion and Hope* (1999); *The Joys of Smoking* (1999). 6/9: *Johnnie Greyeyes* (2000); *Living With Pride: Ruce C Ellis at 100* (1999). 6/10: *2 Seconds*; *Big Eden*; *Love at First Sight* (1999). 6/11: *Man Man Woman Woman* (1999); *The Broken Hearts League* (2000); *Call to Witness* (1999); *Hammering It Out: Women in the Construction Zone* (2000); *Deep Inside Clint Star* (1999). 66 W. 12th St. (212-254-8504); $9, $8 members and seniors.

Ocularis—6/11: *Mysteries of the Organism* (1971). 6/12: A Tribute to Brooklyn Filmmakers. At Galapagos, 70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn; 718-388-8713; $5.

The Screening Room—Through 6/8: "MGM Musicals." 6/6: *Easter Parade* (1948); *The Band Wagon* (1953). 6/7–6/8: *The Pirate* (1948); *Summer Stock* (1950). Midnight Blaxploitation Series: 6/9–6/10: *Across 110th Street*. 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100); $9 ($6 for Sunday-brunch patrons).

Two Boots Pioneer Theater—6/6–6/7: *The Love Machine* (2000). 155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300); $9, $6 seniors.

YWCA Cine-Club—Through 7/30: "The Surreal World of Luis Buñuel." 6/10–6/11: *A Woman Without Love* (1951). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.

aph by Alan Pappe/Neal Peters Collection.

Festivals

Picnic With Pics

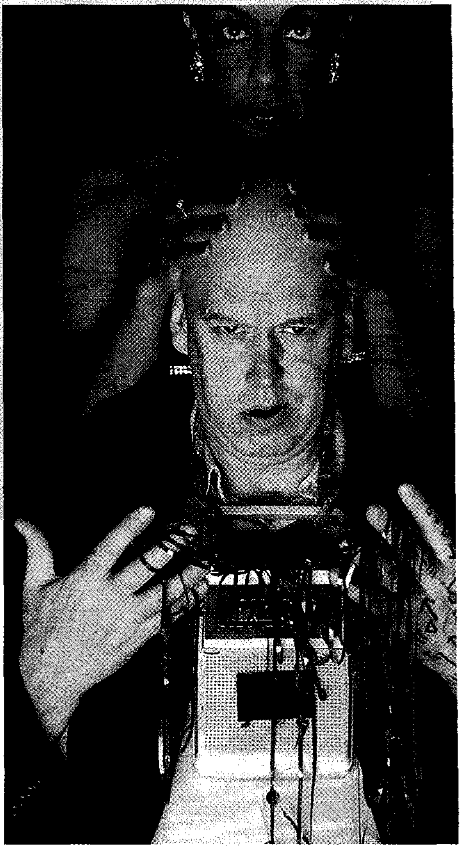
Lay a blanket and your latest fling upon the grassy carpet of Bryant Park to catch flicks ranging from *Grease* to *The Maltese Falcon* every Monday at the Eighth Annual HBO Bryant Park Summer Film Festival. Though you'll have to contend with shrill traffic horns and even shriller Columbia drama students, it beats cabbing your beloved to a Jersey drive-in with the meter running. Begins June 12.

theater

Penn & Teller...Rinde Eckert...Slant

Opening
Opera-School Dropout

Composer–performance artist Rinde Eckert, the son of two opera singers, has been heralded as one of the brightest stars of the avant-garde, but his roots are definitively classical. An accomplished tenor, Eckert (pictured, with singer Nora Cole) saw his first opera at age 5, then studied classically until college, when he realized "that most people in the opera world are interested in the preservation of an institution, not the development of an art." After listening to Eric Clapton and Jack Bruce on Cream albums, Eckert became infatuated with the screeches and shouts of Howlin' Wolf and the bleating harmonica blues of Sonny Boy Williamson and Little Walter. "I started to experience the grandeur of other vocal styles as well," he says, "and I wanted my art to reflect my life—I couldn't do that in opera." So Eckert swore off the classics and built up a strong reputation in the experimental-art scenes of Seattle and, later, the Bay Area. His new work and first extended run, *And God Created Great Whales,* is a two-person musical piece about a mad and modestly talented piano tuner (Eckert) who attempts to compose an epic opera based on *Moby-Dick,* but who must record messages to himself daily so that his degenerating mind can remember the compositions of the previous day. Though his contempt for the opera Establishment is palpable, Eckert says his new work will be "expressive of that ecstatic, overblown opera world" and that he still sympathizes with the part of opera "that believes in building on the past, on a tradition, and in discovering underlying principles that will inform you so that what you do isn't just fashion." Of course, he isn't about to stop experimenting with new sounds: "I plan on peaking," says Eckert, "when I'm about 75." (See "Off-Off Broadway.") LOGAN HILL



Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Macbeth—Kelsey Grammer (*Frasier, Cheers*) and accomplished Shakespearean actress Diane Venora star in this summer's highest-profile Shakespeare. The Royal Shakespeare Company's Terry Hands directs the play on Broadway—not in the park. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Now Playing

Aida—The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. Sets and costumes by Bob Crowley. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).*

Annie Get Your Gun—Bernadette Peters plays the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).*

Beauty and the Beast—Disney's beast is back (No, not the mouse). Andrea McArdle blanches and blushes as the fair maiden; Steve Blanchard roars and repents as the Beast. $25–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Susan Egan and Michael Hall. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

Cats—So many ways to skin a cat—but none of them seem to work! $40–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. Through 9/10. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-239-6200).*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Contact—This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Its two shorter pieces and concluding longer one are of uneven merit but never without interest. Backed up by a terrific ensemble, Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow; as dancer, actress, woman, she is every man's dream and headed for a manifest career. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Copenhagen—A major hit in London, Michael Frayn's heady play about what might have happened when German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited Niels Bohr in 1941 stars Philip Bosco, Blair Brown, and Michael Cumpsty. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dame Edna: The Royal Tour—Other performers have invented running stage personas for themselves like Australia's Barry Humphries and his Dame Edna Everage, but have they been this amusing? I am prepared to declare him the funniest man in today's theater. Also the funniest woman. (Simon: 11/2/99.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 7/2. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dirty Blonde—Brash actress-author Claudia Shear stars in her new play about two Gotham singles who meet at the grave of Mae West, sampling delicious vignettes from the life of the woman who said, "I'm no angel, but I've spread my wings a bit." $55–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation, but the lead does have his haircut. $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 10/22/98. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago.* $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Green Bird—The enchanting surprise of the month, if not the season, this 1765 fairy-tale comedy by Carlo Gozzi is sheer delight. It includes a talking giant sculptured head, a statue that comes to life, a sorceress's garden, and singing apples. It is really for adults, although children will get enough of it to enjoy it, too. Though more modest in scale than director Julie Taymor's other triumph, the song of the Bird is sweeter, smarter, and subtler than the roar of the Lion. (Simon: 4/25/00.) $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jackie Mason—Much Ado About Everything—Jackie Mason is not so funny as Dame Edna (who is?) but still damned funny. He is politically incorrect, and glories in it with ecstatic gloat. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $65–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jesus Christ Superstar—Yeah, he's the Messiah, but what he really wants to do is sing in Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical. $26–$81. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).*

Kiss Me, Kate—With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Les Misérables—What a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*. Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, but this is the one such show adults will feast on, too. (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).*

Miss Saigon—A big helicopter stars in this adaptation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. Through 12/31. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).*

A Moon for the Misbegotten—Thanks to Eugene O'Neill's artistry, the character of Josie is true enough to be a riveting character when incarnated by the right actress, and Cherry Jones is a transcendent actress; when Cherry is in bloom, she is, like her namesake trees, worth a pilgrimage from the four corners of the earth. As James, Gabriel Byrne gives a complementarily moving performance as a lost soul in a dying body, whom we watch superbly enact the painful rites of a redemption as his flesh visibly wastes away. There is a meatiness, a tenacity of grip, and, finally, a grandeur, which this production captures. (Simon: 4/3/00.) $60–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Music Man—Back in 1957, Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. As she has steadily demonstrated, she is blessed with the voice, the looks, and the acting talent of a musical-comedy diva. As Marian Paroo, the librarian of River City, Iowa, who goes from tight-lipped spinster to glowing inamorata in this happy show, Miss Luker gives a performance as detailed, nuanced, and cherishable as ever turned a performer into a legend. Susan Stroman's production has other assets as well, but Craig Bierko, the incumbent Harold Hill, gives an impersonation of Preston rather than a performance. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Eleven leads, eleven years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Real Thing—The clever Tom Stoppard tells a fairly simple story as trickily, as cleverly as possible. He has lots of fun with his assorted adulteries, and his dialogue suitably sparkles. The current revival is less pleasurable than the 1984 American premiere, which had the proper sets and was better directed. Still, Stoppard is one of our few brainy and literate dramatists and once again warms up Broadway's intellectual climate by several balmy degrees. (Simon: 4/24/00.) $35–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).*

The Ride Down Mt. Morgan—Shakespearean star and Starfleet captain Patrick Stewart plays Lyman Felt, a bigamist businessman who must confront his two wives after a terrible accident, in Arthur Miller's drama. $55–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 7/23. *Ambassador Theatre, 215 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).*

Riverdance—This revamped version returns to New York with a more global feel, featuring flamenco dance and South African vocals, along with Irish singer Brian Kennedy and dancers Pat Roddy and Eileen Martin. $25–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).*

Rose—In Martin Sherman's new play, Olympia Dukakis plays a Jewish woman who sits on a Miami Beach park bench and reflects on her life. $30–$60. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45 St. (212-239-6200).*

Saturday Night Fever—Flared pants! $30–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).*

Previews

“Enuf” Said

When Ntozake Shange's 'for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf' debuted at the Public Theater in 1976, her "choreopoem," a deft integration of narrative, dance, and poetry, was heralded as a breakthrough theatrical performance that told unstaged stories about fierce black women and the men who would put them down. Twenty-five years since Shange developed her piece in New York's poetry cafés and bars, actress Jackée (pictured) and choreographer-director George Faison ('The Wiz') will bring it back to the stage. Previews begin June 6 at the American Place Theatre. (See "Off Broadway.")

Swing!—The dance marathon continues, with requisite suspenders and flared skirts. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Taller Than a Dwarf—Parker Posey and Matthew Broderick star in a new comedy by Elaine May. $25–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/11. *Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

True West—Sam Shepard's dysfunctional brothers are brought back to life by two old friends: Philip Seymour Hoffman and John C. Reilly, most recently spotted together in the film *Magnolia*. $65–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/18. *Circle-in-the-Square Theatre, W. 50th St., West of Broadway (212-239-6200).*

Off Broadway

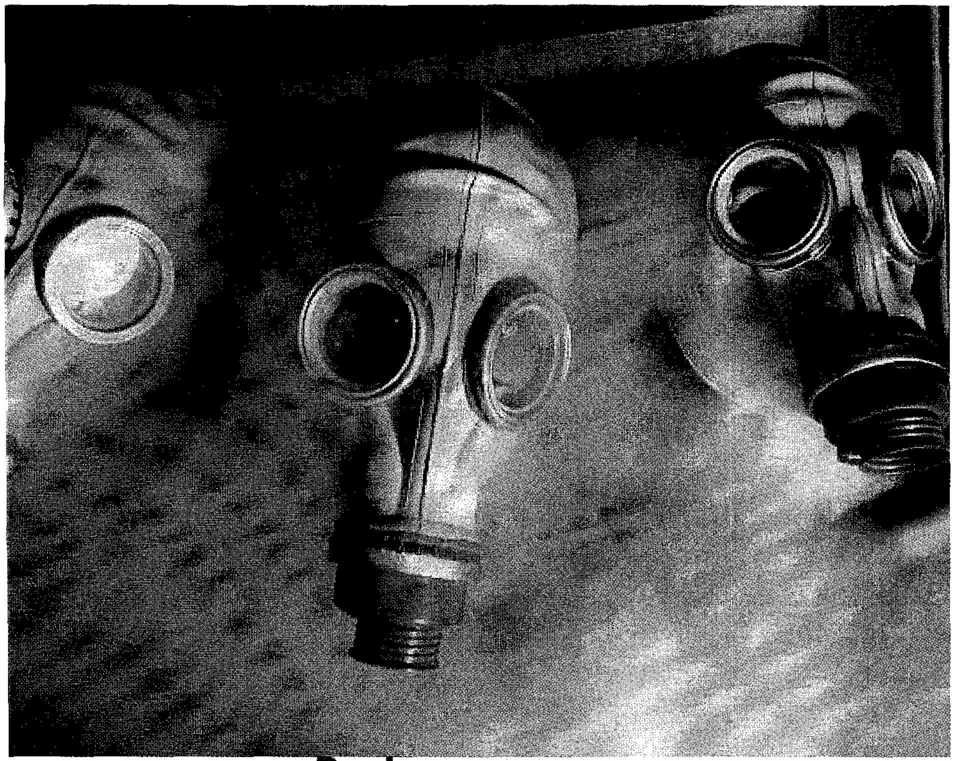
Previews and Openings

The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin—This new musical with book, music, and lyrics by Kirsten Childs stars LaChanze (*Ragtime, Once on This Island*). Directed by Wilfredo Medina; choreography by A. C. Cuilla. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 6/20 opening. Through 7/9. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).*

Current Events—A California senator navigates personal politics at home in David Marshall Grant's new play, directed by David Petrarca (*Fuddy Meers*). $40. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 6/13 opening. *MTC Stage 2 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf—The twenty-fifth-anniversary production of Ntozake Shange's work stars Jackée and is directed and choreographed by George Faison. $45–$49. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 6/6 for a 6/11 opening. *American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).*

Joe Fearless (A Fan Dance)—*Sports Night* onstage: A rabid fan tracks his b-ball obsession in Liz Tucillo's new play. $35. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8. In



Photograph by Perry Young.

Previews

The Freaks Show

The Broadway dust has settled, and elsewhere on the Rialto the freaks have emerged. At La MaMa, the bizarre but delightful Asian-American performance trio Slant (masked, and known to mix puppets, rock music, and gags in liberal quantities) performs its sixth musical, 'High.' Meanwhile, the quirky, expert Shakespeare company Moonwork is pulling off the theatrical equivalent of screaming, "Look, Ma! No hands!" with its set-free, prop-free 'Romeo and Juliet,' in previews at the Connelly Theater. (See "Off–Off Broadway.")

previews for a 6/19 opening. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (212-239-6200).*

Neil Simon's Hotel Suite—This collection of Neil Simon one-acts set in hotels promises more tiny bars of soap than Broadway has seen in a long while. *Hotel* manager is John Tillinger. Guests include Helen Carey, Randy Graff, Leigh Lawson, and Ron Orbach. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 6/15 opening. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900).*

Night of the Assassins—Jose Triana's play about three siblings locked in a basement who reenact the murder of their parents. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 6/7 opening. Through 6/25. *Intar 53 Theatre, 508 W. 53rd St. (212-279-4200).*

Penn & Teller—The comic duo returns. $29.50–$52.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. 6/6–6/11. *Beacon Theater, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (212-307-7171).*

Straight-Jacket—To conceal his sexuality and keep his starring role in *Ben-Hur,* a leading man marries the studio boss's secretary in Rock Hudson–era Hollywood. Written and directed by *Spin City* producer Richard Day. $47.50. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 6/8 opening. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).*

Syria, America—Four pals struggle with their sexuality in a conservative Syrian Jewish community. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Previews begin 6/9 for a 6/12 opening. Through 7/8. *Greenwich Street Theatre, 547 Greenwich St. (212-604-4222).*

Now Playing

Anonymous—*See Simon, p. 59.* $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, and Sun. at 3. *McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-279-4200).*

Blind Alley—Three one-acts about young women by Nancy Neverez. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 6:30. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-354-1293).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).*

The Bomb-itty of Errors—A hilarious, funky-fresh "add-rap-tation" of the Bard's classic and one of the best comedies of the season. $20–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).*

Bruce Vilanch: Almost Famous—A one-man show about the mad, mad, mad world of Tinseltown by *Hollywood Squares* regular and comedy writer Bruce Vilanch. $35–$40. Mon.–Sat. at 8:30. Through 7/1. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).*

Closet Land—Radha Bharadwaj's new play about a successful children's-book writer who encounters a repressive regime. Directed by Jeremy B. Cohen. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 6. Through 6/18. *New York Performance Works, 128 Chambers St. (212-969-0166.)*

Common Things About 16 Dicks From Philadelphia—Empire Theatre presents short plays by David Ives, Jules Feiler, Alexander Dawson, and Richard Harlan Smith, with music by a jazz combo. Charles Gale directs. $15.99. Mon.–Sat. at 8. Through 6/10. *Curricain Theater, 154 W. 29th St. (212-349-6619).*

The Countess—Gregory Murphy's costume drama about the love triangle of John Ruskin, his wife, and painter John Everett Millais. $40-$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (212-997-1780).*

De La Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Perfect for theatrical thrill-seekers who don't mind breaking a sweat. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dinner With Friends—Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).*

The Donkey Show—A fantastic, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* with even looser morals. Very fun. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. *El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).*

The Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up Its Act—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. Now featuring the disco hit "Stayin' Awake." $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).*

Fully Committed—For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. Smartly directed by Nicholas Martin, and exuberantly enacted by Mark Setlock, this play is a day in the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star restaurant. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).*

The Ginger Man—Dublin Theatre presents Irish scribe J. P. Donleavy's adaptation of his novel of the same name. $30–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 7/2. *Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. (212-581-4125).*

The Harmfulness of Tobacco/A Phoenix Too Frequent—The National Asian-American Theatre presents one-acts by Chekhov and Christopher Fry. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 6/17. *Mint Theater, 311 W. 43rd St. (718-623-1672).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Jitney—This is the revised version of August Wilson's first play, the start of what became a ten-part series, still in progress, about African-American lives, one play per decade. Here the seventies are viewed through the goings-on in the office of a gypsy-cab company in the Pittsburgh of 1977. It is so vividly written, acted, and directed (by Marion McClinton, a Wilson specialist) that it keeps you steadily amused, concerned, and moved. All performers are flawless. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $51. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).*

Kiki & Herb: Playing for Time—The downtown duo's

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

first open-ended Off Broadway run, after practically reinventing cabaret theater with renditions of crooner classics and slightly less Algonquin tunes by the likes of Patti Smith, Suicidal Tendencies, and Christina Aguilera. $12–$15. Fri.–Sun. at 7:30. *Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

The Laramie Project—In November 1998, one month after Matthew Shepard's murder, director Moisés Kaufman (*Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*) traveled with his company to Laramie, Wyoming, just as Shepard's death was becoming a catalyst for hate-crime legislation nationwide. Six visits and several hundred interviews later, Kaufman and members of his company present a set of sampled monologues about the town and the murder. $25–$55. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-4100).*

Lydie Breeze—Reconstruction-era idealists attempt to create a utopian commune in John Guare's reworked five-hour play. Idealistic audience members will need to sit through the two halves on consecutive nights, or both parts on Sats. and Suns. $90–$110. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 6/18. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-460-5475).*

Naked Boys Singing—Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-463-0060).*

Night Maneuver—Two brothers battle in this 1983 play by Howard Korder (*Search and Destroy, A Boy's Life*). $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5. Through 7/9. *Trilogy Theatre, 341 W. 44th St. (212-489-1632).*

Our Lady of Sligo—Sinéad Cusack plays the lead in Sebastian Barry's drama about the destructive relationship of an Irish couple. Directed by Max Stafford-Clark. $30–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 7/2. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).*

Our Sinatra—Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, now transferred from a successful run at the Algonquin Hotel. Featuring Eric Comstock, Christopher Gines, and Hilary Kole. $50–$80. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Blue Angel Theatre, 323 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A comedy by Joe DiPietro about four meddling grandparents. $49.50. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

The Penis Responds—Writer Ernest Thompson's ode to johnsons, elephant guns, bishops, muscle cars, etc. $30–$40. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9. Through 6/10. *Blue Heron Arts Center, 121 E. 24th St. (212-279-4200).*

Proof—More math onstage! Mary-Louise Parker plays a young woman who faces an elusive mathematical proof, a would-be lover, and Dad, a very sharp mathematician. Directed by Daniel Sullivan (*Moon for the Misbegotten*). $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. *MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).*

Uncle Vanya—The Roundabout presents Chekhov's comedy, starring vets Sir Derek Jacobi, Laura Linney, Brian Murray, and Roger Rees. Michael Mayer (*Side Man*) directs. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 6/11. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).*

The Vagina Monologues—Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc., returns for a second coming. What was once Ensler's one-woman show is now performed by trios of actresses. Through 6/11: Hazelle Goodman and Kirstie Alley. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Wake Up and Smell the Coffee—The latest one-man wonder by Eric Bogosian (*Pounding Nails in the Floor With My Forehead*). $29.50–$49.50. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 11, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).*

What You Get and What You Expect—Christopher Ashley (*The Country Club, Currently of Palm Beach*) directs Jean-Marie Besset's play about two architects vying for the world's first extraterrestrial commission: a monument on the moon. $45. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-460-5475).*

When They Speak of Rita—The Foote family presents a new drama by Daisy Foote, starring Hallie Foote and directed by Pulitzer- and Oscar-winning writer Horton Foote. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/26. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (212-333-4052).*

Off-Off Broadway

Ache—A bizarre breakup in 139 poems. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 10. Through 6/10. *Flea, 41 White St. (212-226-0051).*

The Butter and Egg Man—The Jean Cocteau Rep presents George S. Kaufman's 1925 comedy. $24–$30. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. at 3. Through 6/25. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).*

Chekhov Vaudevilles—Vaudevilles in the renovated porn palace. $15–$20. Call for schedule. *Nada Show World Theater, 42nd St. and Eighth Ave. (212-586-7829).*

The Designated Mourner—In Wallace Shawn's snooty new adaptation of the Gorey play, three people (Shawn, Deborah Eisenberg, and Larry Pine) decry middlebrow culture. Only 30 tickets available for each performance—how exclusive! $20. Mon.–Sat. at 7. Through 7/15. *21 S. William St. (212-532-8887).*

And God Created Great Whales—Rinde Eckert, with Nora Cole, presents a musical-theater performance about a composer who loses his mind while racing to finish an opera based on *Moby-Dick*. Presented by Foundry Theatre (*Gertrude & Alice, Convention of Cartography*). $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 4. In previews for a 6/8 opening. *DTW's Bessie Schönberg Theatre, 219 W. 19th St. (212-924-0077).*

Hands Afire—Firebrand Staceyann Chin, one of New York's best and fiercest spoken-word performers, rants and reflects on a childhood in Jamaica, her immigration to New York, her sexuality, her family, and Giuliani, whom, she threatens, she wants to make "so scared he has to hire two black butch bodyguards." Directed by Will Pomerantz. $15. Sundays at 9:30. Through 6/25. *45 Bleecker, 45 Bleecker St. (212-505-2367).*

High—Asian-American performance trio Slant, who do a fantastic tribute to Connie Chung, present their sixth musical show. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7:30. 6/8–6/25. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).*

I, Rasputin—Russia's "mad monk" gets wacky in this multimedia performance, written by Todd Alcott and choreographed by Kriota Wilberg, with design work by R. Sikoryak. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 6/11. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).*

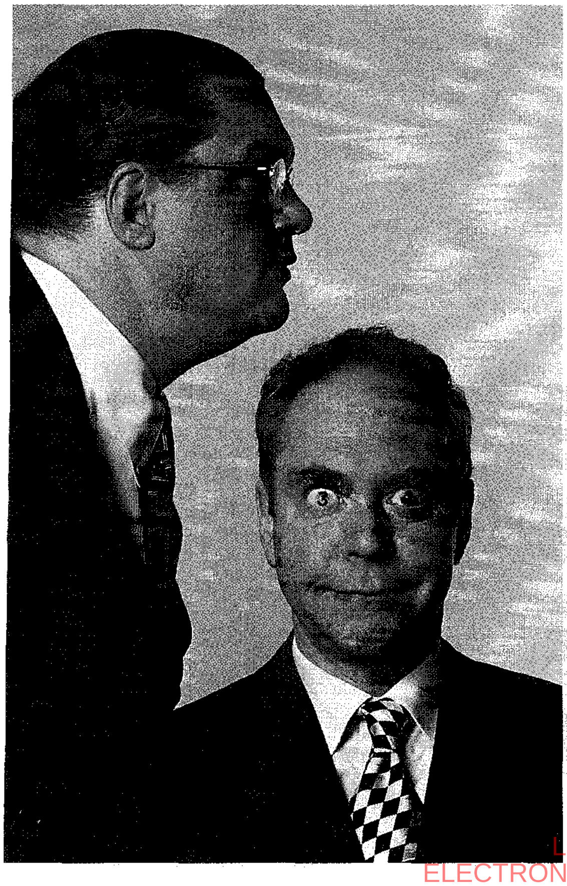
Louise Bourgeois: I Do, I Undo, I Redo—A biographical work about the French-born sculptor by Brazilian actress Denise Stoklas, with sets by Bourgeois herself. $15–$20. Thurs.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 3: 30. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).*

Marathon 2000—Ensemble Studio Theatre's one-act festival featuring works by Leslie Ayvazian, David Ives, Warren Leight, Romulus Linney, and others. $15 for single tickets, $40 for marathon passes. Call for schedule. Through 6/11. *E.S.T., 549 W. 52nd St. (212-247-4982).*

Nosferatu—A multimedia adaptation of the classic vampire flick, starring Nikolai Kinski, the son of actor Klaus Kinski. $12–$20. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Fri. at midnight. Through 6/11. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).*

A Place Like This—A self-reflexive play about the theater written and directed by C. J. Hopkins. Through 6/17. *Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. (212-420-8877).*

Romeo and Juliet—Up-and-coming Shakespeare company Moonwork presents the ultimate tear-jerker. $15. Wed.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 6/11 opening. Through 6/25. *Connelly Theater, 220 E. 4th St. (212-279-4200).*



Onstage
Clean Sleight

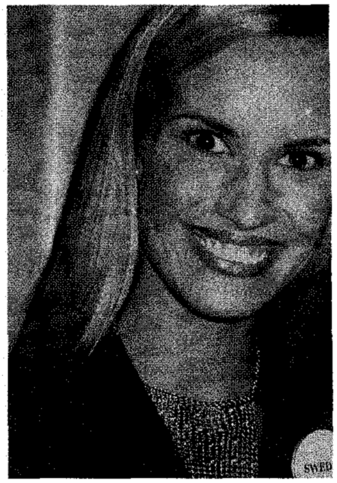
Comedic duo Penn & Teller, authors of the late-twentieth-century classics *Cruel Tricks for Dear Friends* and *How to Play With Your Food*, are back. The diabolically funny pair (Penn, far left, is mightier than Teller) will bring along their tricks, their shtick, and, above all, their refinement and charitable good taste as they unveil a new act at the Beacon Theatre, June 6 through June 11. (See "Off Broadway.")

art

Juergen Teller...Fireworks...Stuart Klipper

Photography
Working Girls

Juergen Teller's 1998 book 'Go-Sees' (Scalo) introduced us to the sometime fashion photographer's endearingly unexploitative shots of aspiring models arriving at and departing from his studio. Now the London-based German photographer is having his first U.S. exhibition, which includes the "Go-Sees" as well as a more recent but like-minded project, 'Miss World,' his candid portraits of contestants (left, Miss Ghana and right, Miss Sweden) in the 1999 Miss World Competition in London. At Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene Street; through July 28.



Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

John Bowman—Recent paintings of stages and theaters that blend reality and fiction; through 6/30. Winston Wächter Mayer, 39 E. 78th St. (212-327-2526).

Elena Climent—New paintings and watercolors of interior scenes with windows looking out to remembered landscapes of the artist's past; 6/7–29. Martin, 23 E. 73rd St. (212-288-2213).

Willem de Kooning—Paintings and drawings of abstracted female figures from the John and Kimiko Powers collection; through 6/30. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-744-2313).

André Raffray—Paintings, drawings, and works in other media that re-create great masterpieces of the past by Courbet, Duchamp, Mondrian, Picasso, Turner, and others; through 7/7. Moeller, 167 E. 73rd St. (212-988-4500).

Joaquin Torres-Garcia—A retrospective of paintings, drawings, and books by the Uruguayan modernist (1874–1949), who worked in Paris and was a cofounder of the movement Cercle et Carré (Circle and Square); through 7/29. CDS, 76 E. 79th St. (212-772-9555).

57th Street Area

David Ahlsted/William Clutz—Paintings of figures in motion or contemplation as they experience a day at the New Jersey shore/Paintings of figures in cityscapes. Through 6/28. Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-7171).

Robert Arneson—A survey of the ceramic self-portrait sculptures from the seventies and eighties; through 7/21. Franklin Parrasch, 20 W. 57th St. (246-5360).

Inka Essenhigh/Peter Halley—Large-scale paintings that combine fluid drawing with the vivid color and slick surfaces of animation cels/Small paintings that continue the artist's exploration of geometric abstraction. Through 6/24. Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-752-2929).

Andy Goldsworthy—Two new site-specific works, including a wall made of clay and a "rush line" drawing composed of reeds woven together; through 7/17. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (212-315-0470).

Ignacio Iturria—Recent paintings depicting everyday life in Montevideo, Uruguay; through 6/25. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900).

William Kentridge/Steve McQueen—New drawings and small figurative bronze reliefs/A film and a slide projection. Through 7/14. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Herbert Bayer—Paintings, drawings, photographs, and photomontages by the Austrian-born artist and designer (1900–1985), who studied at the Bauhaus, served as one of its directors, and later lived and worked in the United States; through 7/21. Kent, 67 Prince St. (212-966-4500).

Gary Gissler—Paintings and drawings incorporating the artist's tiny, handwritten text; through 6/30. 123 Watts, 123 Watts St. (212-219-1482).

Dan Keplinger—Self-portraits, portraits, and still-lifes by an artist with cerebral palsy who wrote and was featured in this year's Oscar-winning documentary, *King Gimp*; through 6/30. Kind, 136 Greene St. (212-925-1200).

Leonid/Michael Hurson—Drawings and paintings by both; through 6/24. Algus, 25 Thompson St. (212-966-1758).

Louis Monza—Drawings from the sixties through early eighties by a self-taught, Italian-born artist (1897–1984) who was a socialist and pacifist and spent most of his life in California; through 7/21. Ross, 568 Broadway (212-343-2161).

Matt Mullican—A survey of the artist's drawings from 1973 to the present; through 6/27. Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (212-925-4338).

Ulrike Ottinger—Film stills by a German avant-garde filmmaker; through 7/7. Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-9074).

Huang Yong Ping—"TaiGong Fishing, Willing to Bite the Bait," a sculpture installation comprising store-bought and fabricated fishing equipment by a Chinese artist who often uses Chinese folklore as a reference; through 7/1. Tilton, 49 Greene St. (212-941-1775).

Ben Potter—Paintings and sculptures that refer to the natural world; through 7/28. Gibson, 568 Broadway (212-925-1192).

Charles Searles—New painted wood constructions; through 6/30. Kelly, 591 Broadway (212-226-1660).

Chelsea

John Ahearn—Painted cast-plaster portraits of the artist and members of his community on New York's East 100th Street; through 7/28. Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474).

Katherine Bernhardt/Michael Gonzalez—New paintings whose iconography draws on such disparate sources as Kobe Bryant, "Peanuts" characters, de Kooning, E.T., and Acne-relief ads/Delicate sculptures constructed from industrial materials. Through 6/30. Team, 527 W. 26th St. (212-279-9219).

Scott Burton—Early sculptures of tables, chairs, and benches, and photographs of the artist's performances; through 6/24. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

Deborah Butterfield—New cast-bronze sculptures of horse forms; through 7/30. Thorp, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-6565).

Greg Chann—Large-scale drawings on vellum that combine chance and deliberate actions; through 6/30. Thatcher, 529 W. 20th St. (212-675-0222).

Walton Ford—New watercolors of animals in scenarios that offer a whimsical history of Western perceptions of the subcontinent; through 6/30. Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. (212-563-4474).

Katharina Fritsch—Two large-scale sculptures that continue the German artist's exploration of fairy-tale imagery; through 6/23. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Chris Hammerlein—Sculptures, drawings, and paintings that allude to Buddhist iconography and Greek and Hindu mythology; through 6/30. Eller, 526–30 W. 25th St. (212-206-6411).

Hearn—530 W. 22nd St. (212-727-7467). Works by Elrod, Prieto, Zilm; through 7/1.

Robert Lobe/Georgia Marsh—New aluminum sculptures of tree and rock formations/Mixed-media works on paper that juxtapose natural and geometric forms. Through 6/30. Senior & Shopmaker, 21 E. 26th St. (212-213-6767).

Emil Lukas—New sculpture and painting; through 6/30. Gorney Bravin + Lee, 534 W. 26th St. (212-352-8872).

Helen Mirra—Minimal sculptures and paintings that address time, space, and travel; through 7/1. Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. (212-807-9494).

Photographs courtesy of Lehman Maupin.

Steve Mumford/Elliott Green—Paintings that depict narratives of animals, cars, and encroaching suburbs/Paintings that focus on the dramatic conflicts or harmonies in relationships. Through 6/24. Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (212-727-3323).

John Powers—Sculptures composed from large wood blocks; through 6/24. Golden, 526 W. 26th St. (212-727-8304).

Richard Prince—Works that incorporate arrangements of publicity photographs of celebrities as well as collectibles (buttons, album covers, etc.) and the artist's own drawings and photographs; through 6/30. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Jim Toia—Sculptures of mushrooms made with beeswax, cast rubber, and paint; through 7/1. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-229-0044).

Mike Wilson/Oona Stern—Paintings, drawings, and collages by "Tattoo Mike," who performed as the "Illustrated Man" at the Coney Island Sideshow for ten years until his death in 1996, as well as photographs of the artist by Marcus Leatherdale, McDermott & McGough, Andy Warhol, and others/An installation made of carpet that viewers can walk into. Through 6/29. Harris, 529 W. 20th St. (212-463-9666).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Americas Society—680 Park Ave. (212-249-8950). "Art of the Americas From the Chase Manhattan Collection: Icon + Grid + Void," paintings, sculpture, and photographs from the bank's collection by North, South, and Central American artists, among them Caldas, Cemin, González-Torres, Porter, Rockburne, Serrano, Vaisman, Wall; through 7/30.

Gat—1100 Madison Ave. (212-327-0441). Works by Bauman, Bell, Cheng; through 6/17.

Salander O'Reilly—20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606). New watercolor landscapes by Graham Nickson; paintings by the self-taught artist Gandy Brodie; works on paper depicting citsycapes and landscapes by Paul Weingarten; through 6/30.

57th Street Area

Cohan—41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171). "Extra Ordinary," objects and images of everyday life that transcend ordinariness by Cape, Celmins, Combs, Floyer, Friedman, Koons, Paine, Richter, others; through 6/30.

Findlay—41 E. 57th St. (212-486-7660). Realist works on paper by Berman, Blondes, Filmus, Freeman, Haas, Konigsberg, Levy, Solomon, others; through 6/30.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General—79 Walker St. (212-219-0473). "Private Worlds," works by Amos, Banach, Greenwold, Heffernan, Greenwold, Kardon, Tewes, Wong, others; through 7/8; "On Translation: The Adapter," a collaborative project between Muntadas and the Department for Public Appearances; through 7/8.

Artists Space—38 Greene St. (212-226-3970). "Anywhere But Here," works by Ancalmo, Brambilla, Goldfarb, Katchadourian, Yasinsky, others; "Transitional Home," works by Chalayan, Coates, Dixon, Thorogood, others; project by D'Nell Larson; through 7/22.

Donahue/Sosinski—560 Broadway (212-226-1111). Paintings by Amouyal, Barth, Cyphers, Whitten; through 6/24.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (212-966-7745). "Neo," works by 22 emerging artists working in the New York area selected by the directors and co-founders of Exit Art, Jeanette Ingberman and Papo Colo; through 8/19.

Gering—476 Broome St. (212-226-8195). "Three Degrees of Separation," a collaboration between Janet Cohen, Keith Frank, and Jon Ippolito, in which an argument unfolds statement by statement around the walls of the gallery; photographs of parking garages by a Berlin-based artist; through 6/30.

Chelsea

Martz—529 W. 20th St. (212-206-3686). Works by Alexa, Estenger, Jervert, Manola, Nalls, Weyland, others; through 7/1.

Maynes—529 W. 20th St. (212-741-3318). Works by Bryant, Flinzer, French; through 6/24.

Sonnabend—536 W. 22nd St. (212-627-1018). "Retrospective," works by gallery artists celebrating the gallery's new location; through 7/30.

Other

Wave Hill—Glyndor Gallery, 675 W. 252nd St. (718-549-3200). "Welcome," works by eleven artists who use furniture and decorative objects as vehicles to explore ideas of domestic space and the relationship between people and nature, among them Baskin, Newman, Wexler, Yamamoto; through 8/20.

Photography

Erica Baum—Photographs of book indices; through 6/30. D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

Baumgartner—418 W. 15th St. (212-633-2276). New photographs by Baker, Geiger, Jennings, Kereszi, Lambert, Pearlstein, Schaesberg; through 7/29.

Manuel Alvarez Bravo—A 50-year survey of the Mexican modernist's abstractions, beginning with his earliest works of the twenties; through 7/8. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (212-223-1059).

Maude Schuyler Clay—Black-and-white photographs of the Mississippi Delta flatlands; through 7/14. Meyerowitz, 580 Broadway (212-625-3434).

Stewart Ferebee—Images of overlooked vernacular landscapes and objects; through 7/1. Rice, 325 W. 11th St. (212-366-6660).

Naomi Fisher—Cibacrome photographs of the artist and her friends in ominous tropical tableaux; through 6/24. Lombard Freid, 531 W. 26th St. (212-967-8040).

Peter Freitag—Images appropriated from European travel brochures and digitally altered to change their narratives from collective enjoyment to loneliness; through 6/24. Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-5937).

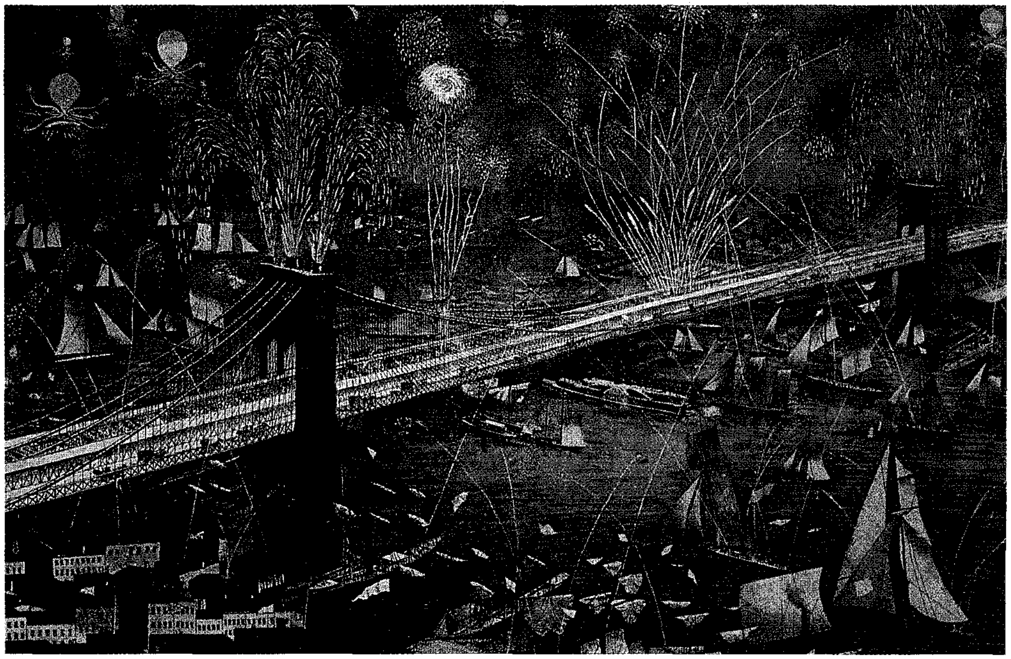
ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (212-860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "James Nachtwey: Testimony." A retrospective of works by the documentary photographer known for his images of human conflict and struggle; through 7/23. . . . "Nathan Lyons: Riding First Class on the Titanic," the culmination of a 30-year project by Lyons featuring 200 black-and-white sequenced images revealing his unique view of America and its social landscape; through 6/18.

Stuart Klipper—Large-scale panoramic color photographs of landscapes in Antarctica; through 7/7. Richardson, 560 Broadway (212-343-1255).

Klotz—22 E. 72nd St. (212-327-2211). A quirky selection of wedding photographs by well-known photographers and anonymous ones; through 6/24.

Helen Levitt—A survey of the photographer's work from the late thirties to the present; through 6/29. Miller, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-3930).

On View **In the good old days, fireworks weren't just for national holidays—they were de rigueur for all manner of spectacle. From the beginning, too, pyrotechnics were a brilliant opportunity for artists and lithographers to weigh in with their impressions of a nighttime sky transformed by bursting patterns of color and light (the booming sound was left to the imagination) and their poetic reflections on the water below. "Fireworks" illuminates the tradition from the fifteenth century through the early twentieth with images of coronations (James II in London in 1685 and Czar Alexander I in Moscow in 1801), weddings (Louise Elizabeth of France to Philip of Spain in 1739), and even openings of bridges (below, *Bird's-Eye View of the Great New York and Brooklyn Bridge, and Grand Display of Fireworks on Opening Night, May 24, 1883,* A. Major, publisher) by Currier and Ives, Edgar Degas, Winslow Homer, Claude Lorraine, Francesco Piranesi, and others. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue; through September 17.**



Photograph courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Thom Lussier—Six color portraits shot over the past four years that render their subjects as silhouettes; through 6/30. Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. (212-727-2752).

Zwelethu Mthethwa—Recent color portraits taken in the temporary homes of emigrants to the Langalabuya settlement in Paarl, South Africa, and black-and-white images of South African men in social settings; through 6/24. Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (212-645-1701).

Tokihiro Sato—Photographs that record movement through specific locations; through 7/28. Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. (212-255-8450).

Rocky Schenk—Photographs of highways, trees, the sea, and other everyday sights manipulated to read as painterly abstract compositions; through 7/7. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (212-517-3766).

Staley-Wise—560 Broadway (212-966-6223). Black-and-white portraits and fashion work by Louise Dahl-Wolfe; vintage prints from the collection of the actress Marion Davis, including portraits of her by George Hurrell and Clarence Sinclair Bull; through 6/24.

Juergen Teller—Photographs from the projects "Go-Sees" and "Miss Worlds," the former chronicling a year of meetings between the London-based photographer and aspiring models and the latter a series of portraits of Miss World contestants; through 7/28. Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Amir Zaki—Vertiginous views of Los Angeles taken from multistory parking structures and tall apartment buildings at night; through 6/24. Golden, 526 W. 26th St. (212-727-8304).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Judy Chicago: Resolutions: A Stitch in Time." A millennium project that is a collaboration between Chicago and a group of needleworkers using a variety of techniques; through 9/3. . . . "Sandy Skoglund: Breathing Glass." An installation in the museum's atrium space consisting of thousands of miniature, mechanized dragonflies; through 9/3. . . . "Tommy Simpson: Garden of the Heart." The sculptor and furniture designer's own life-size version of an ancient Persian garden; through 9/3. . . . "Peter Chang: A Visionary." Jewelry and sculptural objects by a Glasgow-based jewelry designer; through 9/3. 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10–6, Thurs. 10–8 (pay what you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Body Art: Marks of Identity." The history of body art in the U.S., Europe, Africa, New Zealand, and elsewhere, highlighting objects and practices dating back to circa 2000 B.C.; through 8/30. Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"William Merritt Chase: Modern American Landscapes, 1886–1890." Paintings of outdoor scenes in Brooklyn and Manhattan by the American landscapist; through 8/13. . . . "Maxfield Parrish, 1870–1966." The first critical survey of the works of the American artist, including paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, artifacts, and ephemera; through 8/6. . . . "Vivian Cherry: A Working Street Photographer 1940s–1990s." Photographs documenting social conditions in the Lower East Side garment industry, Depression-era Harlem, Brooklyn neighborhoods, and Times Square, as well as images showing the 1950s demolition of Manhattan's Third Avenue El; through 8/6. . . . "Realm of Marvels: Building Collections for the Future." Works from almost every major area of the museum's holdings, representing nearly every culture and almost all of recorded time; through 6/18. . . . "African Masterworks From the Collection of Beatrice Riese." African art collected by the painter Beatrice Riese, who has lived in New York since 1949; through 9/10. . . . "Urban Glass." A collaboration between Urban Glass, the New York Center for Contemporary Glass in downtown Brooklyn, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, consisting of works by contemporary glass artists that were inspired by objects in the museum's collection; through 9/3. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Clocktower Gallery—"Clockworks 2000." Works by the 1999–2000 participants in P.S.1's National and International Studio Program; through 6/17. 108 Leonard St. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sat. 12–6; donation suggested.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"National Design Triennial: Design Culture Now." Recent works by 83 American designers and design firms; through 8/6. 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (5–9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Rodney Graham and Bruce Nauman: . . . the nearest faraway place . . ." A selection of new and earlier works by both artists that reflect their shared interest in the myth of the American West; through 6/18. . . . "Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square*"; through 6/18. . . . "Donald Judd *Untitled*, 1976." A piece from 1976 that is considered one of the late artist's seminal works and comprises fifteen plywood boxes; through 6/18. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Part III: *In Medias Res*"; through 6/18. . . . "Time Traced: Rodney Graham and Vera Lutter"; through 6/18. 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"The Prinzhorn Collection: Traces Upon the *Wunderblock*, From the University of Heidelberg." Drawings by psychiatric patients that were amassed during the twenties by the psychiatrist and art historian Hans Prinzhorn; through 6/10. . . . "Cyrilla Mozenter: Very well saint." A series of collage drawings that takes its title from the phrase "very well saints" used by Gertrude Stein in her libretto for Virgil Thomson's opera *Four Saints in Three Acts,* and whose sense of play can be likened to Stein's inventive use of language; through 6/10. 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection—"Michelangelo to Picasso: Master Drawings From the Collection of the Albertina, Vienna." Drawings by Chagall, Dürer, Klimt, Pollock, and others on loan from the Graphische Sammlung Albertina (Graphic Art Collection Albertina), one of Europe's greatest repositories of works on paper; through 6/18.1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Rudy Burckhardt and Friends: New York Artists of the 1950s and '60s." Photographic portraits of artists by Burckhardt, who died last year at the age of 85, juxtaposed with works by those artists from the New York University Art Collection, as well as a selection of Burckhardt's films and photographs of New York cityscapes; through 7/15. 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780); Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"1900: Art at the Crossroads." An exhibition organized in collaboration with the Royal Academy of Arts, London, offering a radical reassessment of artistic cross-currents at the turn of the century, featuring works by Balla, Bouguereau, Degas, Eakins, Kandinsky, Matisse, Mondrian, Picasso, and others; through 9/10. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 9–6, Fri. and Sat. 9–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum—"Anni Albers." The first comprehensive New York exhibition of the Bauhaus-trained textile designer's work, including more than 200 works created between 1924 and 1978, among them unique wall hangings and weavings, drapery and upholstery fabrics, wall coverings, fabric swatches, texture studies, room dividers, jewelry, prints, and drawings; through 8/20. . . . "Paris in New York: French Jewish Artists in Private Collections." Paintings and sculpture by Jewish artists working in Paris from 1907 to 1939, among them Marc Chagall, Sonia Delaunay, Jacques Lipchitz, Amedeo Modigliani, Chaim Soutine, and Max Weber; through 6/25. . . . "Pickles and Pomegranates: Jewish Homes Near and Far." An interactive children's exhibit that evokes life in two late-nineteenth-century Jewish households; through 10/30. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

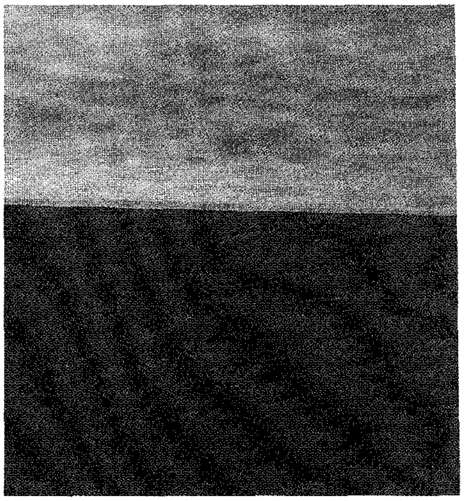
Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Vernacular Photographs From the Thomas Walther Collection." Anonymous photographs dating from the twenties through the sixties; through 8/27. . . . "The Art of Japan From the Mary Griggs Burke Collection." Paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and other works dating from the second millennium B.C. to the early nineteenth century; through 6/25. . . . "Painters in Paris: 1895–1950." Paintings by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, and other artists who worked in Paris; through 12/31. . . . "Perfect Documents: Walker Evans and African Art, 1935." Photographs by Evans depicting the African sculpture exhibited in MOMA's groundbreaking 1935 exhibition; through 9/3. . . . "Fireworks! Four Centuries of Pyrotechnics in Prints and Drawings"; through 9/17. . . . "John Singer Sargent: Beyond the Portrait Studio, Paintings and Drawings From the Collection." Works made by the artist (1856–1925) during his travels in Europe and America; through 9/10. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $10 contribution, $5 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 seniors and students.

Morgan Library—"Treasures From the Royal Tombs of Ur." An exhibition organized by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology comprising jewelry, musical instruments, tools, weapons, cylinder seals, human remains, and other objects and artifacts from the ancient Sumerian city-state of Ur; through 9/10. . . . "Saint-Exupéry's Little Prince." A selection of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's original preparatory drawings for *The Little Prince*, as well as pages from his revised handwritten manuscript; through 8/20. . . . "Sacred Songs: Illuminated Choir Books." Music manuscripts used in the liturgy of the Catholic church during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; through 10/15. 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of American Folk Art—"The Art of William Edmondson." The first major New York retrospective of sculptures by the self-taught American



sculptor since 1937, when he was the first African-American artist to have a one-person show at the Museum of Modern Art; through 8/27. Two Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Making Choices," the second cycle of MOMA2000 exhibitions: "The Marriage of Reason and Squalor." A survey examining opposites as they occur in single works of art; through 9/19. . . . "The Raw and the Cooked." Works by unschooled, outsider, and naïve artists; through 9/19. . . . "Useless Science." The efforts of artists who mimic the methods and conventions of artists; through 9/19. . . . "The Dream of Utopia/Utopia of the Dream." Abstract and Surrealist works by Dalí, Ernst, Malevich, Mondrian, others; through 8/22. . . . "Modern Living 1." Post–World War I designs from the de Stijl, Bauhaus, and Constructivist movements; through 8/22. . . . "Walker Evans & Company." Photographs by Evans and by photographers who influenced him or were influenced by him; through 8/22. . . . "Modern Art Despite Modernism." Works by Albright, Balthus, Cadmus, Feud, Hopper, Rivera, others; through 8/22. . . . "Art Is Arp." Works from the twenties, including wood reliefs, string reliefs, cardboard cutouts, prints, illustrated books, collages, and sculpture; through 8/22. . . . "Giorgio Morandi Etchings"; through 8/22. . . . "War." Works created in response to the threats and effects of mass mobilization and violence; through 8/22. . . . "Ideal Motif: Stieglitz, Weston, Adams, and Callahan"; through 9/26. . . . "Modern Living 2"; through 9/26. . . . "New York Salon." A cross-section of painting and sculpture that marked the beginning of the New York School's rise to prominence; through 9/26. . . . "The Observer: Cartier-Bresson After the War"; through 9/26. . . . "Paris Salon"; through 9/26. . . . "Seeing Double." An exploration of the theme of pseudoscience through artworks that mimicked scientific methods, and of the absurd as a philosophical, literary, and artistic concept; through 9/26. . . . "Shigeru Ban: A Paper Arch"; through 8/1. . . . "Project 70: Jim Hodges, Beatriz Milhazes, Faith Ringgold." Banners by each artist displayed on the museum's 53rd Street façade; through 10/31. . . . "Projects 71: John Bock;" through 6/13. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.–Tues., Thurs. 10:30–5:45, Fri. 10:30–8:15 (4:30–8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Under the El." Images of New York City life in prints, watercolors, and drawings from the museum's collection; through 12/3. . . . "New York Now: Contemporary Works in Photography." Images of New York and New Yorkers from the museum's collection; through 10/15. . . . "Elegant Plate: Three Centuries of Precious Metals in New York City." Objects of silver, gold, and other metals from the museum's collection that were used in or near New York from the early eighteenth century through the twentieth; through 9/24. . . . "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives: 100 Years of Labor in New York City." Photographs and oral histories documenting the lives of New York City's workers over the past century; through 7/16. . . . "New York: Songs of the City." More than 50 pieces of lavishly illustrated sheet music for songs celebrating New York; through 9/10. . . . "The New York Century: World Capital, Home Town, 1900–2000." An exhibition of objects from the museum's collection conceived by the design firm Pentagram; through 7/9. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"Louise Dahl-Wolfe, The American Image." A full-scale retrospective of the noted fashion photographer's work, including still-lifes and portraits of Mae West, Cecil Beaton, Eudora Welty, and others; 6/13–8/12. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

National Academy of Design—"The Watercolors of Charles Hawthorne." Watercolors spanning the years 1915 to 1930 by the founder of the Cape Cod School of Art; through 7/30. . . . "Stuart Davis in Gloucester." Approximately 45 paintings and watercolors of Gloucester on Cape Ann in Massachusetts made by the artist between 1915 and 1934; through 7/30. 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12-5, Fri. 10-6; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Picturing the Modern Amazon." Images of physically strong women in paintings, drawings, videos, sculptures, photographs, and other media by more than 60 contemporary artists, among them Matthew Barney, Judy Chicago, Nicole Eisenman, Jane Hammond, Mary Ellen Mark, Nancy Spero, and Cindy Sherman; through 7/2. . . . "Tiborocity: Design and Undesign by Tibor Kalman." A retrospective of the late designer's work in print, film, video, and product design, including more than 200 pieces from his personal collection; the archives of M&Co., the design firm he founded in 1979; and his contributions as editor-in-chief of the Benetton-sponsored magazine *Colors*; through 8/7. 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs.–Sat. 12–8 (free Thurs. 6–8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New-York Historical Society—"New York Inside Out." A juried exhibition of photographs by New Yorkers documenting their own lives at home; through 8/20. . . . "Stork Club." An exhibition tracing the history of New York's legendary nightclub through letters and business records, photographs, menus, and accessories bearing the nightclub's logo; through 10/1. . . . "Magnum Our Turning World, Photographs 1989–1999." Works by photographers who work or worked for the legendary photo agency; through 6/18. . . . "Jessie Tarbox Beals: On Assignment." Works by America's first female photojournalist; through 7/9. . . . "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America." Photographs documenting lynchings in America from the 1870s through the 1950s; through 7/9. 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center—"Around 1984: A Look at Art in the Eighties." Works by a selected group of artists who were practicing in the eighties, among them Basquiat, Bickerton, Clemente, Cragg, Calle, Halley, Holzer, Kapoor, Koons, Salle, Schnabel, Steinbach, Sherman; through 9/30. . . . New works by Rob Pruitt, Ricardo Ribenboim, and Luca Vitone; through 6/18. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art—"Art at Work: Forty Years of the Chase Manhattan Collection." More than 120 contemporary artworks from the bank's collection, by Acconci, Barney, Clemente, Close, Gober, Nauman, Prince, Sherman, Wegman, others; through 10/1. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Tues.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Carnival Strippers: Photographs by Susan Meiselas." Photographs of women who perform strip tease for a living taken at rural New England fairs in the seventies; through 9/10. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–9 (pay what you wish every Thurs. 6–9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Shahzia Sikander: Acts of Balance." The first one-person museum exhibition of the Pakistan-born artist's work, comprising an installation of wall paintings and a mural-size, three-panel painting that combine Islamic and Hindu artistic traditions with elements of Western art and popular culture; through 7/7. 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

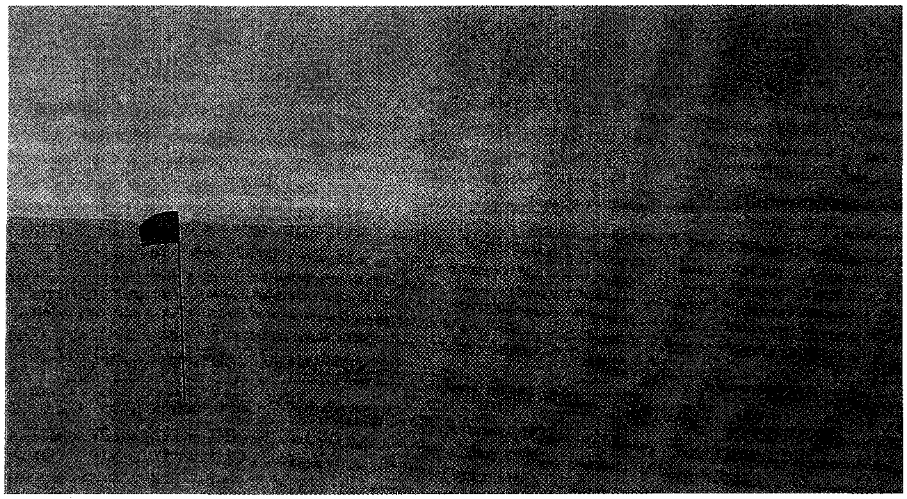
Christie's—20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000). 6/7 at 10 and 2: "Fine Jewels." On view from 6/3. 6/8 at 10 and 2: "Twentieth Century Decorative Arts." On view from 6/3. 6/8 at 3: "Master Works: 1900–2000." On view from 6/3. 6/8 at 10 and 2: "Watches." On view from 6/3. 6/9 at 10 and 2: "Antiquities." On view from 6/3. 6/12 at 6: "Single-Owner Collection of Antiquities." On view from 6/10. 6/13 at 10 and 2: "Antiquities." On view from 6/10.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430). 6/7 at 10: "Twentieth Century Decorative Arts." On view from 6/3. 6/8 at 10 and 2: "Antique and Fine Jewelry." On view from 6/3. 6/14 at 10: "American Furniture, Silver, Folk Art, and Decorative Arts." On view from 6/10.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730). 6/7 at 10: "Belle Epoque: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Decorative Arts." On view from 6/3.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000). 6/7 at 10:15 and 2: "Books." On view from 6/3. 6/9 at 10:15 and 2: "Art Nouveau." On view from 6/3.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710). 6/7 at 12: "Modern Art." On view from 6/3. 6/8 at 10:30: "Autographs." On view from 6/3.



Photograph courtesy of Yancey Richardson Gallery.

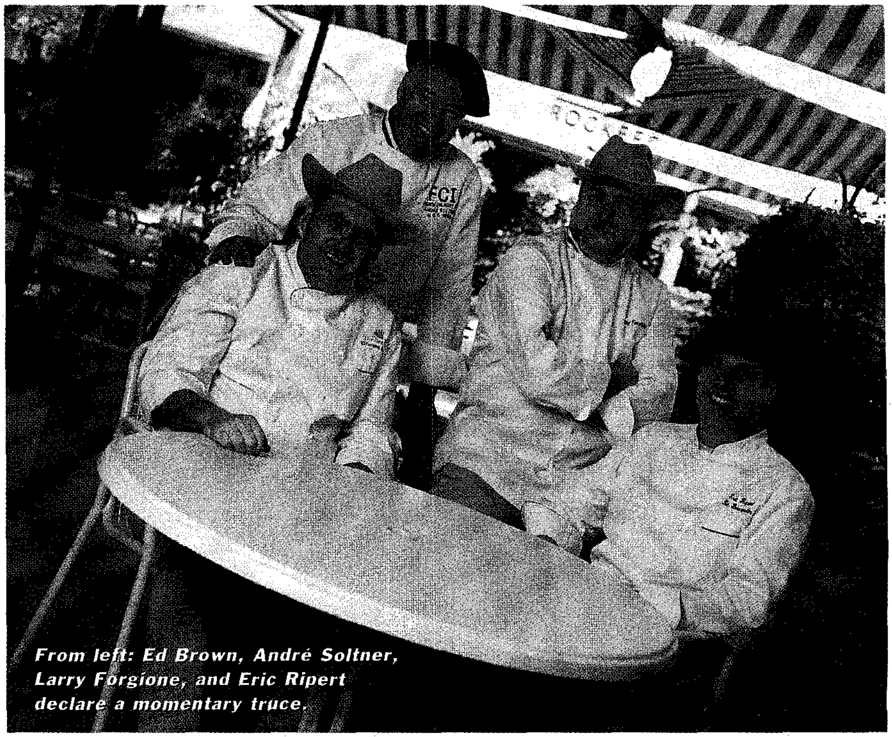
Talent

White-Out

Photographed in November 1999 and February 2000, Stuart Klipper's latest panoramas of Antarctica—he has traveled there six times since 1987, courtesy of the National Science Foundation's Artists and Writers Program—continue his search for symbols of human transience in one of the world's most naturally minimal places. At Yancey Richardson Gallery, 560 Broadway; through July 7.

restaurants

Revolving Sushi...A Sutton Place...AZ



From left: Ed Brown, André Soltner, Larry Forgione, and Eric Ripert declare a momentary truce.

One-Shot **A posse of Michelin two- and three-star chefs from France will sashay into the garden of Rockefeller Center at sundown Monday (June 12) to answer the call to the French/American Chefs' Barbecue Challenge. One thousand revelers will chow down on the delicious cracklings, cutlets, and crumbs of the feast, then dance under the stars till the wee hours. It's Restaurant Associates' Tribute to James Beard for the benefit of Citymeals-on-Wheels. Local heroes of the range, star whisks from across the country, and a trio of classic-barbecue masters will man and woman the grills, then dish up dessert. Celebrity chefs will include Le Bernardin's Eric Ripert, the French Culinary Institute's André Soltner, the Sea Grill's Ed Brown, and An American Place's Larry Forgione, co-creator of the annual cookout. Two dozen winemakers will pour. Citymeals expects to deliver 150,000 meals to the city's homebound elderly with the proceeds. (To order $375 tickets, call 212-687-1290.)**

GAEL GREENE

Manhattan

Lower New York

Bari—Downstairs, this perpetually bustling café attracts SoHo shoppers taking time out for cappuccino, sandwiches, and a view of the always entertaining street scene. Ascend the spiral staircase for a more substantial meal in the loftlike dining room, which features a woodburning oven and grill and dishes like spice-rubbed duck breast with bok choy, crispy roasted halibut, and broiled asparagus with browned Parmesan and bread crumbs. *529 Broadway, at Spring St. (212-431-4350). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($).*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine and beer, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates they call "international tapas." Typically creative selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. *55 Liberty St., second fl. (212-791-WINE). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Greatest Bar on Earth—This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers, curious club kids, and the inevitable tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes global bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. Live music Tuesday through Saturday. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (212-219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has conquered TriBeCa. It's still virtually impossible to get a reservation, but the intrepid hordes can wait for a table to open up two doors down at Next Door Nobu. *105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (212-233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Omen—Step off this quiet SoHo side street, and you're suddenly transported to Kyoto—a feeling that's reinforced by the traditional menu and decorative calligraphy and ceramics. *113 Thompson St. (212-925-8923). (M–E) AE.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (212-274-8883). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Sosa Borella—This full-service TriBeCa café is just as good for an afternoon espresso as for a full meal, not to mention the weekly tango lessons. Sandwiches come nearly two dozen ways; the Italian-Argentinean menu features entrées like Milanese steak and short ribs of beef. *460 Greenwich St. (212-431-5093). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (212-941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wild Blue—In an intimate room that's warm and plushly comfortable but doesn't try to compete with the famous view, chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steakhouse. Exceedingly moist chicken gets a Med-rim treatment with olives and preserved lemons, and buttermilk fried oysters with chipotle

Photograph by Bruce Katz.

cream and spoon bread are an inspired take on an American classic. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef and TV personality Michael Lomonaco supervises the kitchens of this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs with Maytag blue cheese, and lobster potpie with truffle cream, spinach leaves, and a chive biscuit. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Telephone Bar & Grill—This East Village fixture was serving classic pub grub like shepherd's pie and fish and chips long before anyone thought of British comfort food as trendy. A youngish crowd gathers here for happy hour (Mondays through Fridays, 4 to 7p.m.) and for a typically hearty Irish breakfast on weekends. *149 Second Ave. (212-529-5000). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (212-645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Jekyll & Hyde—Can you guess the theme of this boisterous Village restaurant? Billing itself as a "haunted explorers' club," it offers interactive entertainment, special effects, and—so that famished explorers may keep up their strength—a menu of American fare like grilled tuna steak, pumpkin tortelli in sun-dried-tomato cream sauce, and "voodoo-spiced" Cajun steak. *91 Seventh Ave. S. (212-989-7701). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Northern Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard garden is available for private parties. *69 Macdougal St. (212-673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. *23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (212-460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel—Commuters and business travelers will be glad to know they can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, whether for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal of such French-influenced American fare as foie gras French toast, tuna tartare, and ribeye of veal with Swiss chard. *42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (212-807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metro Fish—Hearty fish dinners with all the fixin's in a "nautical townhouse" setting. Live lobsters, crabs, and other fresh seafood platters are simple, satisfying, and reminiscent of the sort of shore dinners served in seaside towns along the Northeast coast. Those with more of a culinary wanderlust can sample the house-special bouillabaisse. *8 E. 36th St. (212-683-6444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metronome—This 10,000-square-foot Flatiron space is especially well suited to private functions, but even the lone diner (or foursome) will find the Deco design welcoming and the food—riffs on a Mediterranean theme like "pinchos" of vegetables with goat cheese, and za'atar-crusted rack of lamb, prosciutto, and Brie over herb risotto—satisfying. Live jazz performed Thursday through Saturday. *915 Broadway, at 21st St. (212-505-7400). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (212-677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (212-689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

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The Pump Energy Food—There simply isn't any way to cheat at this self-billed "Physical Fitness Restaurant," which is actually more of a takeout shop with a counter and handful of stools. The falafel is baked, not fried; the tuna is low-sodium; and all the egg dishes are whites-only. In fact there's no fried food at all, no oil period, not even a soda in the house. In what may be a redundancy, a section of the enormous menu is categorized as "plain food." *113 E. 31st St. (212-213-5733). Also, 40 W. 55th St. (246-6844). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Tivoli Bar and Grill—This midtown restaurant aspires to attract a hip, young crowd. Thus, live music on Thursday night, a D.J. on Saturdays, and a menu heavy on seafood like raw shellfish, fish and chips, and lobster ravioli in seafood broth. There's also a happy hour, with all its attendant grub: chicken wings, mozzarella sticks, nachos, and a complimentary appetizer of the day. *515 Third Ave., nr. 34th St. (212-532-3300). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (212-243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Verbena—Diane Forley's seasonal American cuisine is at once delicate and deliciously satisfying; the room, similarly, pulls off the neat trick of feeling luxurious and minimalist at the same time. The menu is whimsically divided into two categories—fruits and vegetables, and fish, birds, and meats—with such appealing entries as butternut squash ravioli with roasted orange sauce, and rack of lamb with Yorkshire pudding. In summer, demand a garden table. *54 Irving Pl. (212-260-5454). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Water Club—This romantic spot overlooking the East River is a favorite for formal affairs, but even your average demanding New York diner would be happy with the American menu and the airy, yacht club–like setting. As to be expected in this nautical environment, there's a heavy emphasis on seafood like lobster and soft-shell crabs, and a massive spread for Sunday brunch. Jackets suggested in the main dining room. *F.D.R. Drive via 23rd St. (212-683-3333). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

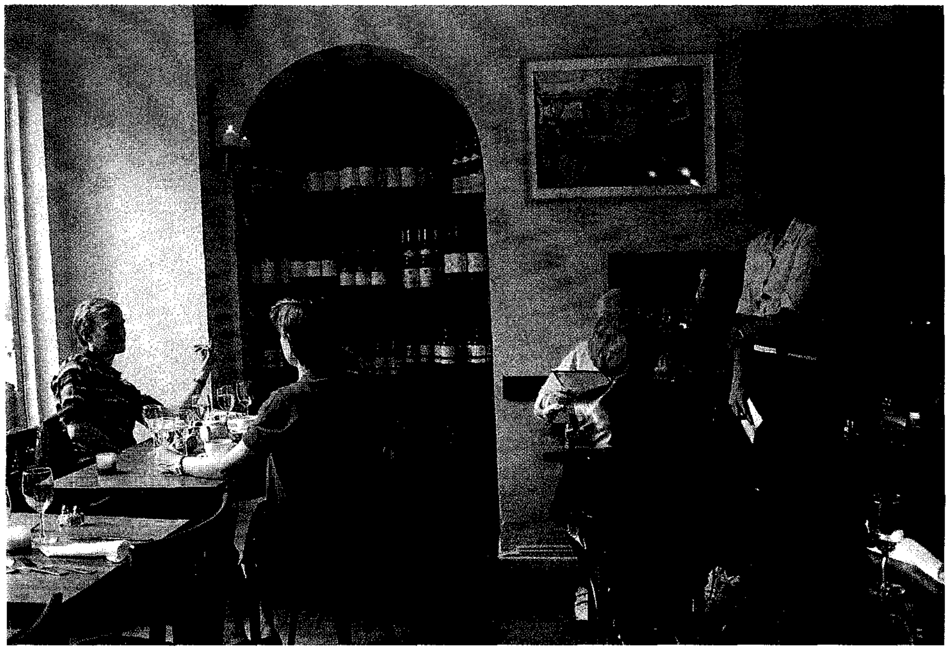
Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar—This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. Out-of-towners will feel right at home. *234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (212-398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (212-243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Opening
Joul Fief

Normally, when an ambitious French cook flees the bureaucracy of a hotel kitchen or crawls out from under the shadow of a celebrity-chef boss to open his own humble place on a shoestring budget, it's somewhere downtown, with cramped tables that wobble and a cash-only policy. Which is why it's nice that Bertrand Vernejoul, late of the Pierre Hotel (and before that, Le Comptoir), in partnership with his wife, Heidi, has opened his bargain-bistro Café Joul in the tony Sutton Place precincts of Guastavino's and Rosa Mexicano. The neighborhood has already discovered his gently priced pissaladière, boudin blanc, and a potpie concoction he curiously calls a seafood cassoulet, which makes a dramatic entrance under a puff-pastry lid. (1070 First Avenue, near 58th Street; 212-759-3131.)



Photograph by Patrik Rytikangas.

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (212-989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Fusion@Ohm—One of the new crop of all-in-one entertainment centers: dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an international fusion menu that features Vietnamese vegetable spring rolls, rigatoni bolognese, and pistachio-crusted chicken breast with morel sauce. *16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Hush—This Flatiron venture is part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu, served in shareable portions. *17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (212-727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

World Yacht Dining Cruises—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: a collaboration with some of the city's biggest culinary talents, featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown, Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson, and Montrachet's Remi Lauvand and dessert creations from Payard Pâtisserie, all prepared by World Yacht's executive chef Wayne Tuman. Jacket required. Reserve. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Askew—Free French fries! For some, that's reason enough to visit this cheerful little restaurant where virtually everything else conforms to the intriguing theme of marinated meat on a stick. There's skewered chicken and mango, beef au poivre, and panko-crusted salmon, plus stickless soups, salads, and vegetable sides. *1004 Second Ave., at 53rd St. (212-421-8742). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Della Femina—Jerry Della Femina tapped Kevin Penner, the very talented chef from the adman's Hamptons hot spot, to supervise the stoves at his Manhattan outpost. His city food places the same premium on high-quality ingredients in dishes like day-boat halibut, langoustines with black truffles, and rib-eye steak. Sit at the bar, converse with the very able and accommodating bartender, and try to guess the identity of every A- and B-list celebrity in the collage of caricatures. *131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found, unwinding. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck-breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I) AE, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (212-754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Genki Sushi—Not your typical sushi bar but a moving conveyor belt with color-coded dishes that indicate the price of your lunch. This midtown branch is the first American outpost of an Asian megachain headquartered in Singapore. The restaurant, whose high-tech design incorporates a wall of exposed sound panels, Lucite chairs and stools, and a Warholian upholstery pattern, also offers bento boxes, vegetarian dishes, sashimi, and a varied sake selection. *9 E. 46th St. (212-983-5018). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Jimmy Sung's—This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions—and, as demonstrated by its sushi bar, other countries. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings, or mini-banquets. *219 E. 44th St. (212-682-5678). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. *405 E. 52nd St. (212-755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Christian Delouvrier's masterful classic French cooking. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Maloney & Porcelli—A midtown steakhouse with something extra, courtesy of consulting chef David Burke's contributions—including something called "angry lobster"—plus whole leg of lamb, an extensive wine list, and an innovative menu of American classics. A second-floor party room has a fireplace and skylights. *37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.—It's hard not to feel like a king surveying his kingdom from the balcony of the awesomely renovated Grand Central Terminal. And it's easy, with David Walzog's high-protein menu, to eat like an athlete: Choose from Maine lobster, a 44-ounce double porterhouse for two, barbecued short ribs, pepper-crusted buffalo sirloin, and a superlative New York strip. There's a private dining room and a private smoking room. And if you (or your progeny) so desire, you can mark the occasion with a trip to the souvenir shop, for basketball- or steak-themed paraphernalia like baby rattles and dog bones. *23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Monkey Bar—Since its swanky renovation by David Rockwell, this midtown landmark has undergone several chef changes. Andrew Chase has infused the menu and the retro-feeling dining room with new spirit by way of inspired new dishes like coriander-crusted duck breast with Bartlett pears, onion tart with potatoes and bacon, and loin of rabbit with confit and foie gras ravioli. Plus a special cocktail-hour canapé menu, to be enjoyed in the monkey-mural bar with nightly piano music. *60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montebello—The staff at this cozy neighborhood restaurant offers a gracious welcome, while the kitchen provides upscale Northern Italian fare, especially affordable in the four-course pretheater menu. Specialties include angel's-hair pasta with fresh tomato and basil, and shrimp sautéed with cognac, broccoli, and red peppers. Private party room available. *120 E. 56th St. (212-753-1447). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

ASK GAEL

Haven't you had enough klutzy East-West fusion?

Oh yes. And after a recent tangle with Scandinavian-Asian, I was braced for the worst at AZ. Yet another Stygian lounge, seemingly poised for a run of ficklettes, dims any hope as we enter. Still, a certain warm, almost ingenuous welcome, and what struck me as a couple of million dollars' worth of glass elevator, cascading water, and sliding glass roof, signal an alert as we swiftly devour a trio of sensational chutneys on Indian flat bread, succumbing to the artful seduction of the tabletop design—each bowl and plate different. Then chef Patricia Yeo's bold and clarion asparagus and peekytoe-crab soup cinches it. Lapsang souchong–smoked quail with scallion pancakes and tempura soft-shell crab with its avocado-and-herb hand roll on the $52 prix fixe are delicious, too. *She dares seared tuna, ever-so-slightly* bland, atop warm oxtail salad, and triumphs. Lemongrass lobster from the grill in a coconut-ginger broth impresses with its perfect cooking. I'm so bored with fanned slivers of duck breast, I welcome even Yeo's duck schnitzel, wreathed in hazelnut butter. Plum-wine broth with cherries and litchi sorbet is so brilliant and refreshing I decide not to strangle our ridiculously exuberant waiter and to return for more soon. (21 West 17th Street; 212-691-8888.)

Photograph by Bruce Katz.

Oceana—Fish-savant Rick Moonen's extensive and excellent seafood menu make this room, reminiscent of the dining cabin on an elegant ocean liner, a favorite for business lunches and romantic evenings alike. The upstairs bar is a perfect retreat for cocktails and seafood snacks in midtown. *55 E. 54th St. (212-759-5941). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oscar's—This contemporary American brasserie is named for the Waldorf-Astoria's longtime maître d', Oscar Tschirky, creator of such legendary dishes as the Waldorf salad and veal Oscar. The menu leans toward updated classics like yellowfin-tuna tartare and smoked Hudson Valley foie gras with truffled red-wine marmalade. Designer Adam Tihany transported the history-laden dining room into the twenty-first century with a much-needed face-lift. *Lexington Ave. at 50th St. (212-872-4920). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has broken with mealtime tradition. Rather than offer straightforward appetizers and entrées, Gras divides his menu into categories like ocean/river (lobster soup flavored with chestnuts), field/forest (seaweed and field greens), black truffle (Venetian pasta), and farm (rabbit chop wrapped in pasta). And rather than price each individual dish, he charges by the number of courses one selects: $54 for three, $67 for four, and up. The sommelier's suggested wine pairings are available for an additional price, and jackets are required. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (212-753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Vong—Wow! This is Thai to die for. Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's little Third Avenue-by-way-of-Bangkok palace was designed by architect David Rockwell, and it's a showy temple indeed—there's gold leaf on those walls. The menu's full of wonders, starting with the crab rolls and coconut-milk-and-galangal soup. *200 E. 54th St. (212-486-9592). (E) AE, CB, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Algonquin—Draws on its history as the fabled stomping ground of literary giants. The wood-paneled sitting-room-like lobby still holds many imaginations captive. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Aquavit—An elegant midtown respite for sophisticated Scandinavian food, set in the glass-enclosed atrium of the former Rockefeller mansion. The menu offers delicately flavored Swedish versions of tea-smoked duck, lobster salad, venison, and, of course, gravlax and herring. *13 W. 54th St. (212-307-7311). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bar Code—Good clean fun is the revitalized Times Square mantra, and this 24/7 interactive entertainment arcade targeting adults dishes it out. Those who wish to revisit their childhoods—if those childhoods were spent in a high-decibel-level video arcade—celebrate here with chocolate martinis, Mud Slides, B-52s, and the kind of food (wings, pizza, burgers, pot stickers) that doesn't distract too much from the high-tech games. *1540 Broadway, nr. 46th St. (212-869-9397). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (212-246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entirely to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Opening B. Gone

After B. Smith fell out with the Ark restaurant group (her original partner), she left her venerable theater-district digs for new ones around the corner. But her old chef, Henry Chung—more of a company man, apparently—stayed behind, and is now cooking traditional steaks, chops, and seafood, from bacon-wrapped scallops to linguine with clams, at the newly named, redecorated Jack Rose (appetizers, $6.95 to $11.95; entrées, $16.95 to $29.95). (771 Eighth Avenue, at 47th Street; 212-247-7518.)

Brasserie Bit—With David Ruggerio supervising the kitchen at this new theater-district restaurant, customers can expect a bit of Italian cooking to seep into the French-American brasserie menu. Pre- or post-curtain appetites are sated with hearty fare like braised short ribs with olive-oil-enriched mashed potatoes, and garlic-roasted pork shank. Want something less heavy-duty? Try the European tapas, served at the serpentine zinc bar. *258 W. 44th St. (212-869-4440). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (212-974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Estiatorio Milos—The New York outpost of a Montreal favorite, this stylishly spare Greek restaurant specializes in perfectly fresh seafood, arranged market-style on ice and grilled simply with organic herbs and imported olive oil. The fish selection runs from the familiar—red snapper, pompano—to the more exotic, like loup de mer, Moroccan pageot, and Greek dente. Finish with super-creamy goat's milk yogurt with honey. *125 W. 55th St. (212-245-7400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (212-688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a theater-district shrine to the stars of stage and screen. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks and herb-crusted rack of lamb to crab cakes and marinated duck breast. Theatergoers will want to know about the $23.50 prix fixe dinner, and music lovers about the live jazz and blues on Saturday night and the Sunday jazz brunch. *150 W. 47th St. (212-869-5482). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have earned him a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrénées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Local—This theater-district American bistro has lots of cozy booths and turns out sophisticated, refreshingly imaginative fare with international accents but doesn't go overboard. Try the pan-seared scallops with Maine crab cake and sweet-corn chowder; the roasted North Atlantic salmon with spring vegetables; and the excellent desserts. *224 W. 47th St. (212-921-2005). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—This place is always buzzing, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (212-265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Sitar Indian Cuisine—This casual restaurant attracts office workers and midtown's ever-growing hordes of tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. *58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

St. Andrews—In what might be New York's only full-fledged Scottish restaurant, the bartenders wear kilts, the scotch is single-malt, and the décor consists of wine cabinets, old Scottish Rail posters, and pictures of famous golf courses. The hearty steak-and-seafood menu features dishes like rack of lamb, tenderloin, and brook trout stuffed with crabmeat and Irish oatmeal in a scotch-whiskey sauce. *120 W. 44th St. (212-840-8413). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (212-397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Armani Café—This stylish midtown haven for weary shoppers (and informed eaters) on the sixth floor and rooftop terrace of the clothing store offers wonderfully fresh salads, al dente pastas, delicious sandwiches, and entrée specials like chicken breast with lentils, roasted vegetables, and polenta. *601 Madison Ave., nr. 57th St. (212-715-0500). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn Diner USA—"The Finer Diner" serves a gourmet reworking of the foods of everyone's favorite borough, from fragrant chicken soup with challah to a "fifteen-bite hot dog," with refreshments like Penfolds Cabernet and chocolate malts. *212 W. 57th St. (212-581-8900). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Dawat—You can't miss with tandoori—cooked before your eyes in the big ovens in the back—or with any of the more unusual regional specials. Actress and cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey supervises the very popular and wide-ranging menu. *210 E. 58th St. (212-355-7555). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (212-758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Photograph by Liz Steger.

Gabriel's Bar & Restaurant—Just four blocks from Lincoln Center, this acclaimed Northern Italian favorite of theatergoers and neighborhood regulars alike manages to be unintimidatingly comfortable and culinarily sophisticated at the same time. Hearty dishes include gnocchi in duck ragù, braised short ribs in a sauce of dark beer and sage with a semolina custard, and wood-grilled tuna with fresh horseradish. The hot chocolate has a cult following. *11 W. 60th St. (212-956-4600). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (212-753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (212-996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Isle of Capri—Three steps away from the hustle and bustle of Bloomingdale's, here's a cozy Italian spot that's been around for 40 years, serving specialties like pappardelle con porcini and trippa alla Calabrese. *1028 Third Ave., at 61st St. (212-223-9430). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Jo Jo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. *160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mark's—Decked out like a private London club, with plump, tasseled pillows to nestle against. Fine French-American cooking (torchon of foie gras with cranberry-kumquat compote, pan-roasted lobster with Armagnac jus), award-winning wine list, and a Willy Wonka–worthy chocolate tea. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (212-877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados,* fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas,* fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (212-961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Vela—A comfortable, unpretentious spot for Northern Italian food. Worth sampling are the zuppa di pesce, the risotto, and the wild-mushroom, black-olive, and goat-cheese pasta. *373 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 77th St. (212-877-7818). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (212-864-7326). (I) ($).*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (212-769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sapphire Indian Cuisine—A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle, an area in sore need of a tandoori infusion. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the currently trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. *1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Peter Luger—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24–01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening
Number by Colors

Genki Sushi, the far-flung international chain that opened its only Manhattan location, in midtown, three years ago, has just spawned a Battery Park City branch. There may be no better place to avoid interacting with a taciturn sushi chef than at Genki's continually replenished conveyor-belt bar, a sort of sushi baggage carousel where you're encouraged to make off with anything that looks good. No need for menus either: Plates are priced by color. Splurge on sea-urchin sushi (the green plate, $7.50) or scrimp on cucumber roll (red; $2.50). To supplement the raw fish, there's seaweed salad, bento boxes, dumplings, and tempura, but they require placing an actual order. (4 World Financial Center; 212-945-3096.)

Photograph by Liz Steger.

nightlife

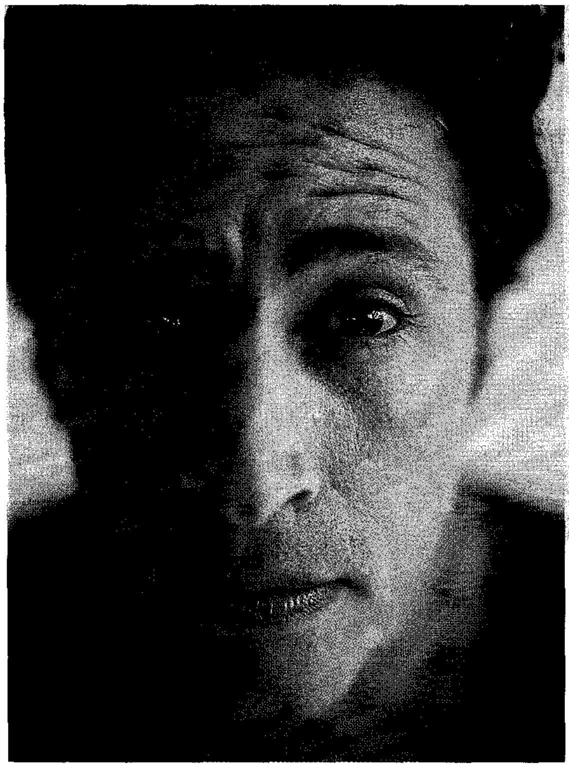
6th Element...Toyota Comedy Fest...Al Green

Concerts

Kiss—6/9–6/10 at 7: With Ted Nugent and Skid Row. *Jones Beach Amphitheatre, Wantagh, Long Island (212-307-7171). $35–$85.*

"6th Element"—6/10 at 2 P.M.: With D.J.'s Aphrodite, Afrika Bambaataa, Mickey Finn, Tony Humphries, Dave Ralph, Sandra Collins, Donald Glaude, Kevin Yost, D.J. Kool Herc, and more. *Randall's Island (212-307-7171). $45.*

Tim Finn With Tara MacLean—6/8 at 8. *Angel Orensanz Foundation, 172 Norfolk St. (212-780-0175). $25.*



Performance Shtick Picks

From Jon Stewart's (pictured) stand-up to a viewing of Cynthia Nixon and Andy Dick's performance in 'Advice From a Caterpillar,' the Toyota Comedy Festival will flood the city with funny business through June 10. Other highlights include locals Ahna Tessler and Lauren Engel, Louis C.K., and the Upright Citizens Brigade. (See "Comedy.")

Small Stages

Bottom Line—6/5–6/6: Sam Harris Revival. 6/9: Marshall Crenshaw Band; David Olney. 6/10: Susan McKeown and the Chanting House. *15 W. 4th St. (212-228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—6/7: The Getaway People. 6/8: Calexico; Macha. 6/9: L7. *6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).*

Fez—Sundays: Jackie Beat, "I Didn't Mean to Turn You On." Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays: Kiki & Herb, "Playing for Time." 6/5: Jonatha Brooke; Toyota Comedy Festival: Va Va Voom Room. 6/6: Toyota Comedy Festival. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Hogs & Heifers Honky Tonk North—6/6: Big Ed & the Side Pockets Blues Jam. 6/8: Jimmy Nations. 6/9: Robert Gordon & the Lustre Kings. 6/10: The Niagras. *843 First Ave., bet. 95th and 96th Sts. (212-722-8635).*

Irving Plaza—6/7: David Gray. 6/8–6/10: Moe. *17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).*

Joe's Pub—An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: "Benefit," a downtown music revue. Tuesdays: "Original Roses" with D.J. Beverly Bond. Wednesdays: Reggae music with "Fever." Thursdays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Sundays: The deep-house-oriented "Love Bazaar" with D.J. MKL. 6/5: B. D. Wong. 6/6: Corey Harris & Henry Butler. 6/7: Maya Beiser. *425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200)*

Knitting Factory—6/5: Roswell Rudd and Broad Strokes; Tom Harrell Quintet; Jean-Michel Pilc Trio; Joel Harrison and Free Country; the New York Saxophone Society. 6/6: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: JazzTimes Superband; Greg Osby's Quintet; Darren Lyons Group; Baritone Saxophone Band. 6/7: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: James Blood Ulmer Earth Driver Raw Blues; Sun Ra Arkestra; the Other Quartet; "Tim Berne Presents an Evening of Raw Space." 6/8: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: Marilyn Crispell; Matthew Shipp "String" Trio; the Ori Kaplan Quartet; Hakon Kornstad Trio; One World Ensemble. 6/9: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: "Jeff "Tain" Watts Experience; the Ravi Coltrane Quintet; Michael Formanek's Northern Exposure; Yuko Fujiyama; Cindy Blackman Quartet. 6/10: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: Mario Pavones Nu Trio; Dave Douglas Sextet; Ben Allison and Medicine Wheel; "Back to the Future." 6/11: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: "The Art Ensemble of Chicago: A Tribute to Lester Bowie"; Akosh S. Unit; the Joe Maneri Quartet; Oliver Lake Steel Quartet. 6/12: The Blue Rags; Dead Cat Bounce; Joel Newton Situation. *74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.*

Makor—6/6: Drew Gress Quartet. 6/7: Topaz. 6/10: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: The Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band. 6/11: Ron Affif Solo Guitar. *35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).*

Manitoba's—Mondays: Beat Rodeo. Saturdays: Adam Roth. Tuesdays: "Hardcore" with hosts Misstress Formika and Candis Cayne. 6/7: Courtney Lee Adams Jr. 6/8: Jonnie Chan and the New Dynasty Six. 6/9: The Demolition String Band. 6/11: Slow Death. *99 Ave. B (212-982-2511).*

Maxwell's—6/6: Super Furry Animals. 6/7: Willy Porter; Oh Susannah. 6/8: Red Radio Flyer; Team U.S.A. 6/9: The Wild Magnolias. 6/10: New Wet Kojak. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—6/5: Nash Kato. 6/6: Willie Porter. 6/7: Continental Drifters. 6/8: Six By Seven. 6/9: Paul Ruderman. 6/10: French Kicks; Stereo Bate. 6/11: Peter Case. 6/12: Lloyd Cole. *217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).*

S.O.B.'s—Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 6/6: Carl Thomas. 6/7: Rosie Ledet & the Zydeco Playboys. 6/8: Hugh Masekela & Sibongile Khumalo. 6/9: Bilal Oliver; Sweet Micky. 6/10: Katende; Karnival! *204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).*

Wetlands—Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 6/6: Secret Chiefs; Estradasphere. 6/9: Dispatch; Granian. 6/10: Bloo; Cousin Fungus; Mother Freedom. 6/11: Sex Pistols Tribute CD Release Party with Blanks 77; Sub Machine; ICU. 6/12: Dismember; Krisiun. *161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600). $.*

Clubland

Centro-Fly—Its of-the-moment status passing, Centro-Fly will, we hope, get down to the business of becoming a great dance club. Note to owners: Bottle service might bring in the big bucks, but the vibe on the dance floor suffers immeasurably. Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo and occasional special guests like Armand van Helden and "Little" Louie Vega. The second Friday of every month: Long-running house party "N'Ice," which made an exodus from Baktun after more than a year at the meat-packing-district nightspot. The change hasn't hurt them any: Chicago house-music god Marshall Jefferson spun a heavenly set there. Third Friday of every month: House party "Con-fusion," also a refugee from Baktun, with big-name D.J.'s like Chicago's Pierre. Saturdays: Energetic house and Big Beat with "Plant." The last Saturday of every month, Plant presents D.J.'s Junior Sanchez and Roger Sanchez (no relation), two of New York house music's finest. Sundays: Dressed-up hip-hop with "VIP Sundays" featuring D.J. Max Glazer and Jessica Rosenblum. Mondays: After a long hiatus, Frankie Inglese's retro soul, funk, and R&B party "Soul Kitchen" returns. *45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).*

Cheetah—A tacky, jungle-themed club with a spacious dance floor and a decent sound system nonetheless. Tuesdays: "Twelve West," D.J. Nicky Siano's wildly fun, campy after-work party where Chelsea boys, fierce voguers, men in Superman costumes (!) get their groove on for an early-week romp that rivals the ecstatic energy of "Body & Soul." Thursdays: "Clique," where the socialite set grooves to hip-hop beats. Fridays: Blokes go crazy to trance and house at "GBH" ("Great British House"). *12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).*

"Destiny"—Saturdays at 10. A great new Saturday-night soulful house party in Brooklyn with a nice roster of guest D.J.'s like Tony Humphries, Nicky Siano, and Fred Pierce. The nightspot's spacious, dancer-friendly floor, no-attitude door policy and warm, friendly crowd make "Destiny" one of the year's best new club nights. 6/10: D.J.'s Markus

Photograph by Justin Case/Corbis Outline.

Rice; Louie Lou; Jennie Hopper. *1 Front St., Brooklyn (718-707-1377).*

Frank's Lounge—A bare-bones bar and dance spot, which hosts Lorie and E-Man's frenzied but low-key house-music party "Bang the Party" every Friday. The party, which has been at venues all over town from the 205 Club to Baktun, is just now settling into its own groove. And what a groove it is: On a recent Friday, track-suited break-dancers, baggy-pants-clad dancers, and bare-chested muscle men got down to the ecstatic house of D.J. White Mike with a floor-shaking intensity. *660 Fulton St., at S. Elliott St., Fort Greene, Brooklyn (212-726-1322).*

The Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. Fridays: "Big Fridays" offer big fun for the weekender straight crowd. Saturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on the bar. *515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.*

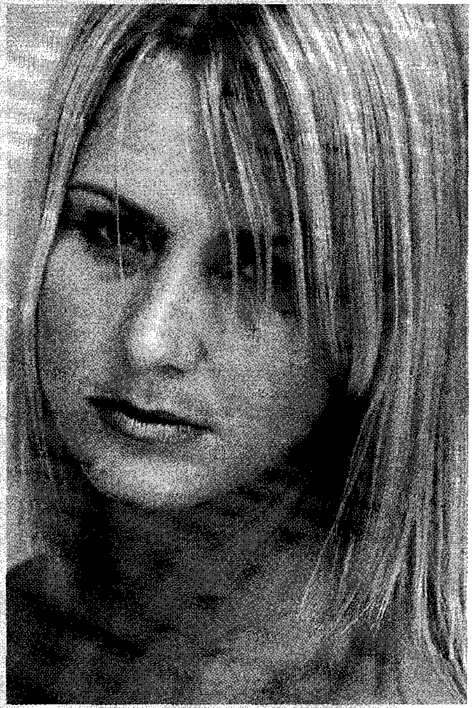
Twilo—Twilo is the superclub of the moment, thanks to a revolving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee attractions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays," a low-key alternative to the frenzied Friday nights. Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. 6/7: D.J. Rasoul; Matthias Heilbronn; Joeski; Neil Aline. 6/9: Deep Dish; Dave Seaman. *530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).*

Vinyl—Stripped of its liquor license, this once-hedonistic downtown space is now a dance-music purist's paradise and quite possibly the best club in the city. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, low-key (for now), dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: Hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. *6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).*

Performance

A Heartbreaking D.J. of Staggering Genius

If D.J.'s are indeed "the new rock stars," *Behind the Music* must be waiting for Sandra Collins (pictured), a New York–based trance superstar with looks right out of a *Maxim* spread and a story straight out of Dave Eggers's best-seller. Raised in Las Vegas by a stand-up-comedian father and a model-actress mother, Collins spent a significant part of her early years in casinos (mostly the A-list ones: Her father opened for Frank Sinatra, Milton Berle is her godfather, and her mother had a brief affair with Elvis Presley). Then the heartbreak started: Collins's father died of a heart attack when she was 5, her mother of complications related to a heart murmur when Sandra was 19. Collins got a hairdresser's license and an apartment of her own, then got interested in D.J.-ing because "my boyfriend had two turntables and a mixer." Captivated by late-eighties experimentation, she started off spinning house, eventually moving to New York and playing punkier techno at Frankie Bones's legendary early-nineties "Storm Raves." Around that time, she says, she discovered trance, "the perfect combination of house's sweet melodies and techno's hard beats." After years of globe-trotting the D.J. circuit, Collins got her big break when she was asked to mix the third installment of the big-selling *Tranceport* series, which has helped expose the vaporous trance sound of British D.J.'s like Paul Oakenfold and Dave Ralph to mainstream audiences. Collins's *Tranceport,* however, takes the series from its usual Ecstasy-induced sentimentality into rougher, more psychedelic territory. Collins will bring those beats to a massive, open-air festival called "6th Element" at Randall's Island on June 10, where she'll be joined by a stellar cast of hip-hop heavies like Afrika Bambaataa, drum-'n'-bass dons like Aphrodite, house heroes like Tony Humphries, and rave ringleaders like Rabbit in the Moon. When told of the lineup—Collins has been touring so extensively that she hasn't had a moment to check her itinerary—she turns into a fan. "Wow! That's, like, everybody," she exclaims. "I'm so excited!" (See "Concerts.")



ETHAN BROWN

Jazz

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: Al Green—6/7 at 7. With Odetta; Curtis Fowlkes. *Central Park, Rumsey Playfield, 72nd St., mid-park (877-4BA-FEST). $37 in advance; $40 at the door.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: Chick Corea & Origin—6/11 at 8. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-997-1003). $25–$45.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: Galactic—6/6 at 6:30. With Dr. John; Ballin the Jack. *Central Park, Rumsey Playfield, 72nd St., mid-park (877-4BA-FEST). $22 in advance; $25 at the door.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: John Zorn: Chamber Works—6/9 at 8 and 10:30. *Angel Orensanz Foundation, 172 Norfolk St. (212-780-0175). $20 in advance; $25 at the door.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: Los Lobos—6/11 at 1. With Barbarito Torres; the David Sanchez Sextet; Bobby Sanabria y AscensiUn; Dr. Chris Washburne. *World Trade Center, Austin J. Tobin Plaza (877-4BA-FEST). Free.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: Operazone—6/5 at 8. *Angel Orensanz Foundation, 172 Norfolk St. (212-780-0175). $20 in advance; $25 at the door.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: "String and Jazz: New York Stories"—6/6 at 8. With the German-American Chamber Orchestra. *Angel Orensanz Foundation, 172 Norfolk St. (212-780-0175). $20 in advance; $25 at the door.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: The Neville Brothers—6/10 at 1. With the Robert Cray Band, Jon Lucien Quintet, Elliott Sharp's Terraplane, Sex Mob. *World Trade Center, Austin J. Tobin Plaza (877-4BA-FEST). Free.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: The Roots—6/8 at 6:30. With Arto Lindsay, the Wild Magnolias. *Central Park, Rumsey Playfield, 72nd St., mid-park (877-4BA-FEST). $20 in advance; $25 at the door.*

"Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" Presents: "Welcome to the Voice—An Opera"—6/9 at 8: Featuring Elvis Costello and the Brodsky Quartet. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-997-1003). $40–$65.*

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra directed by Paul Ellington. 6/7: Melissa Walker. 6/8–6/10: Roy Haynes Trio Featuring Danilo Perez and John Patitucci. *315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 6/6–6/11: Toots Thielemans Quartet. *131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).*

City Hall—Mondays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. *131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).*

Deanna's—This Lower East Side jazz haunt run by singer Deanna Kirk should give Tonic a run for its money. The venue is open Tuesday through Sunday. Kirk performs on most nights. *107 Rivington St. (212-420-2258).*

Iridium—In the surreal basement across from Lincoln center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30 Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 6/6–6/11: Ron Carter & Hank Jones. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 6/5: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents Guillermo Klein. 6/6–6/10: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents the Music of Keith Jarrett. *116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).*

Photograph by Carlos Amoedo.

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

"Oris Spirit of Jazz" Series Presents: The Louis Hayes Quintet—6/6 at noon. *Tourneau Time Machine Atrium, 57th St. and Madison Ave. (No phone). Free.*

Red Blazer—Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz Band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. *32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. *183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 6/6–6/8 and 6/11: "Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival" presents: Kenny Garrett. *88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—Located in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern now offers the occasional pianist in its "Crystal Room." Like a trip to Vegas—without the airfare! Four-hour sets begin at 6:30 weeknights, at 7 on weekends. Pianists Scott Gordon, Michael Ferreri, Rich Siegel, Paul Katz, and Michael Favata entertain diners weekdays. No cover; no minimum. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (212-873-3200).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 6/6: Susie Ibarra Improv. 6/7: Thurston Moore; Scanner & Annie Gosfield. 6/8: Roger Kleier; Michael Blake's Free Association. 6/9: David Watson; Phillip Johnston. 6/10: Anthony Coleman's Sephardic Tinge; Wibutte. 6/11: PG Six; Dary John Mizelle; Golden Calves. *107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 6/6–6/11: Leon Parker. *178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Tues.–Thurs., shows at 9:30; Fri.–Sat., shows at 8, 10, and midnight. Jim Norton, DC Benny, Jim Gaffigan, Robert Kelly, Jordan Rubin, Nick Swardson & Macio. *82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).*

Carolines On Broadway—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. $12.50–$24.50; two-drink minimum. 6/6: Leo Allen. 6/7: "The Girl Show." 6/8–6/10: David Alan Grier. 6/8–6/11: Mr. Paul Mooney. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 6/11: Colin Quinn; Dave Attell; Wanda Skyes; Nick DiPaolo; Greg Giraldo; Godfry; Marc Maron. *117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).*

Gotham—A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun.: New Talent Showcase. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights; two-drink minimum. 6/6: Lewis Black. 6/7: Robert Klein. 6/8: Breakup Girl Live. 6/9–6/10: Greg Rogell; Marc Cohen; Greer Barnes; Orny Adams; Gary Greenberg. *34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).*

"Spin Cycle Comedy"—Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. *King Size Laundromat, 178 Seventh Ave., at 20th St. (212-501-6016). Free.*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. $12 cover. *236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).*

"Toyota Comedy Festival"—With Jon Stewart; Cynthia Nixon and Andy Dick; Eddie Brill; Louis CK; Greg Giraldo; Wali Collins; Janeane Garofalo; Charles Grodin, and more. Through 6/10 at venues throughout the city including *Carnegie Hall, 152 W. 57th St. (212-247-7800); the Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100); and Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200). General information: 212-307-7171.*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Fresh from a major overhaul, the Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) Sundays: The Howard Fishman Quartet. 6/6–6/17: Buddy Greco. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).*

Arci's Place—A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. Sundays at 8: Lisa Asher and Jeff Waxman. Mondays at 8: Steven Lutvak. *450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).*

Cafe Carlyle—Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45; $60. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebrates her fourteenth year at the Cafe Pierre with a special program called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years of American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. *Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195).*

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books—Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin's eleven-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. *156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? 6/11: The music of Kurt Weill with Doug Bradford, Robert Burns, and Camille Diamond. *343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.*

Feinstein's at the Regency—Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $60; $50 food-and-drink minimum. Through 6/10: Rosemary Clooney. *540 Park Ave., at E. 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri.–Sat. at 9 and 11. $30 cover; $20 minimum. 6/10–7/1: Kane Alexander. *365 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).*

Judy's—This cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 6/5: Marieann Meringolo in "Come Along With Me"; Ricky Ritzel and Aaron Morishita. 6/6: Kim Garfunkel with Paul Trueblood. 6/7: Leslie Anderson with Bobby Peaco. 6/8: Evy Schiff with Iam Herman. 6/9: Arthur Kirson and Jay Kerr in "Our Own Songbook—Part 2"; Bianca Leigh in "Venus on Bandshell." 6/10: Judy Kreston and David Lahm in "Keep It in the Family"; Richard Cramer with Ricky Ritzel. 6/11: Robert Durant with David Lahm; Francesca Maese with David Lahm and Ratzo Harris; Biance Leight in "Venus on Bandshell." 6/12: Marieann Meringolo with the Doyle Newmyer Trio. *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).*

Performance
Green Supreme

Al Green (pictured) has a voice that's one of the most unmistakable in pop, at once deeply soulful and otherworldly. And although he left behind the sexy seventies soul he made with producer Willie Mitchell that's influenced everyone from Prince to the Wu-Tang Clan for a Memphis ministry and sporadic albums, he'll bring his still-strong voice to Central Park's Rumsey Playfield on June 7. (See "Jazz.")

Photograph by Jim McCarthy/Retna.

in concert

Electra at Carnegie Hall...Maya Beiser

Classical Music

Mannes Bach Institute—Performs large and small chamber works of Bach, 6/5 and 6/12 at 8. *Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. (212-580-0210, ext. 277); $15.*

Sirius String Quartet—Synthesizes jazz, rock, and classical music in its showcase of new compositions, 6/5 at 8. *Cornelia Street Cafe, 29 Cornelia St. (212-989-9319); $10.*

Metropolitan Soloists—Perform music for wind ensemble; works by Beethoven, Brahms, Krommer, Mozart, Strauss, and others, 6/5, 6/12, and 6/19 at 7. *Isham Park at northeast corner of Isham St. and Broadway; rain location 20 Cumming St., bet. Broadway and Seaman Ave. (212-569-7137); free.*

Lisa Garner, Flute—Ventures from twentieth-century chamber music by Philippe Gaubert and Teresa Levelle to traditional Irish songs, newly arranged and accompanied by cello, saxophone, voice, and violin, 6/6 at 8. *Weill Recital Hall, 541 W. 57th St. (212-247-7800); free.*

Maya Beiser, Cello—Crosses cultures and the boundaries of her classical training with commissions from international composers including Evan Ziporyn, whose work is inspired by Georgian liturgy and the music of Bali. 6/7 at 8.30. *Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8770); $15.*

Jean-Guy Proulx—Canadian organist from the Cathedral of St. Germain in Rimouski, Quebec, performs works by Luis Vierne and Charles-Marie Widor, 6/7 at 1:30. *St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Ave. and 50th St. (212-751-9039); free.*

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Three contemporary composers perform their own works, including Steven Mackey's *Physical Property* for guitar and string quartet and Joan Tower's *Petroushskates* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, 6/7 at 7. *Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. $15, $10 seniors and students.*

Valerie Capers Jazz Ensemble—Celebrates Hoagy Carmichael's centennial with "Georgia on My Mind,""Stardust," and classics by Gershwin, Jobim, and others, 6/7 at 8. *Weill Recital Hall, 541 W. 57th St. (212-247-7800); $32, $14 seniors and students.*

Riverside Symphony—Premieres Marius Constant's *103 Regards dans l'eau,* and introduces Debussy's ballet score *Khamma* and Ravel's chamber Trio to New York audiences for the first time, 6/8 at 8. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $40, $25 seniors and students.*

Hinds Sisters Trio—Performs Purcell, Pergolesi, Britten, and Bellini, among others, and a medley of spirituals arranged by Esther Hinds and pianist Joseph Joubert, 6/11 at 3. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $25–$50.*

Dinos Constantinides—Conducts his own works, *Concerto for Cello* and *Rhapsody II,* and new music from colleagues and students at Louisiana State University. Program includes Aris Carathasis's *Three Moods of Summer* and Richard Adams's *Three Pieces for Percussion. Weill Recital Hall, 541 W. 57th St. (212-247-7800); $32, $14 seniors and students.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Preview

Belles Canto

To paraphrase Oscar Wilde: For one family to produce two opera singers is a misfortune; three looks like carelessness. Born in Barbados and brought up in Brooklyn, Esther, Grace, and Ruby Hinds transmute the spirituality they absorbed within their close-knit, churchgoing family into a powerful presence on the stage. "When you look across the set at someone with whom you're so intimate, there's a comfort level that's very different," Esther explains. "In the emotional exchanges there's a greater depth of feeling because you're so familiar." Of their faith, Grace says, "It enhances your ability to communicate the text. If you can bring it from the heart, it has a whole different kind of energy." It's an experience they seek to share, taking their audience "to another time, another space." Their program at Alice Tully Hall on June 11 ranges from the delicacies of seventeenth-century English song to a selection of spirituals arranged by Esther with the pianist Joseph Joubert, who will be accompanying them. In 1991, they sang the three principal roles in Bellini's *Norma* with the Kentucky Opera, and they haven't looked back since. An operatic fervor spills from their conversation: "I knocked her out once," Esther jokes, referring to Grace and the trio they'll perform from *The Magic Flute,* in which the sisters fight over a man in Mozart's lavish harmonies. The three exude a kind of Renaissance air in the way their faith informs their art. "When you're fortunate enough to come together to create something beautiful," Esther says, "then the divine part of it is the part that goes directly to the human soul." (See "Classical Music.") TARA PEPPER

Opera

Mikis Theodorakis—The Nobel candidate presents his *Electra* performed by the Manhattan Philharmonic with the Metropolitan Opera's Reveka Mavrovitis. The masked chorus is enhanced by the company-in-residence at the Center for Ancient Studies at NYU; 6/11 at 2. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $50–$100.*

Dance

American Ballet Theatre—Continues its spring season through 7/1; please call for performance schedules and prices. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000).*

New York City Ballet—Continues its nine-week season through 6/25; please call for performance schedules and prices. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-870-5570).*

H.T. Chen and Dancers—Premieres *Bian Dan,* a dance with a multigenerational cast involving nondancers, 6/1–6/11; please call for times. *La MaMa Experimental Theater Club, 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710); $15–$20, $12 seniors and students.*

The Parsons Dance Company—Premieres *Images,* a multimedia dance collaboration between Parsons and photographer Howard Schatz, 6/6– 6/18; please call for times. *The Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $35.*

3 point juncture—Premieres four works by female choreographers including Yanira Castro's *Upholstery,* featuring Latin rhythms and movement inspired by city life, 6/8–6/17 at 8. *Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. (212-346-8510); $15.*

Gerald Casel and Dancers—Striking out on his own after dancing with Zvi Gotheiner, among others, the Philippine choreographer presents *Gravity/Lost* and *Suite Rhapsodalia,* with live music by Canadian singer and percussionist Charmaine LeBlanc. *Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer St. (212-334-7479); $15, $10 seniors and students.*

Photograph by Lisa Kohler.

the mix

Queen Noor...Ernesto Zedillo...Joe Heller Remembered

John Leonard's TV Notes

Legacy of a Kidnapping: Lindbergh and the Triumph of the Tabloids (6/6; 9 to 10 P.M.; WLIW21) lets *Harper's* magazine editor Lewis H. Lapham walk the streets and apostrophize the camera between swatches of old newsreel footage about the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann for the kidnapping and murder of the Lindbergh baby in 1932. Lapham's basic point is that tabloid sensationalism arrived long before O.J., Monica, and Elian; that Walter Winchell was a template for Peter Jennings; and that the "Sob Sisters" of the Hearst papers perfectly anticipated Diane Sawyer and Barbara Walters. What a pleasure to hear prose on television that is as elegant as it is scornful. But why pick only on ABC? Not that they don't deserve it, but so does everybody else.

M.Y.O.B. (6/6; 9:30 to 10 P.M.; NBC), a sitcom that may remind you of the feature film *The Opposite of Sex* but is still more original than anything NBC came up with last fall, slips into a summer slot after reruns of *Will & Grace.* Our unreliable narrator is Katherine Towne, a teen runaway who, looking for the mother who abandoned her for Finland and a cult, ends up living instead with her flabbergasted aunt, Lauren Graham, a high-school principal as innocent of men and the mean-street world as her niece is cynically wise. They will have to mind each other's business, and I like both of them a lot.

The Invisible Man (6/9; 8 to 10 P.M.; Sci Fi), the two-hour pilot of a Friday-night series that owes more to *La Femme Nikita* than it does to H. G. Wells, stars Vincent Ventresca as a small-time thief who, to avoid prison, agrees to an operation that implants in his brain a light-bending gland that cloaks him with invisibility when not driving him insane. To mitigate the unfortunate side effects, he needs booster shots of a sort of swine-flu vaccine, which he can only get from the secret government agency that cut him up in the first place—in return for which, of course, he performs dangerous services. Based on the pilot and the first episode, *Invisible* hasn't decided yet whether to be mostly dark and only sometimes funny, or vice versa. But it's got a stylish look and some interesting twists.

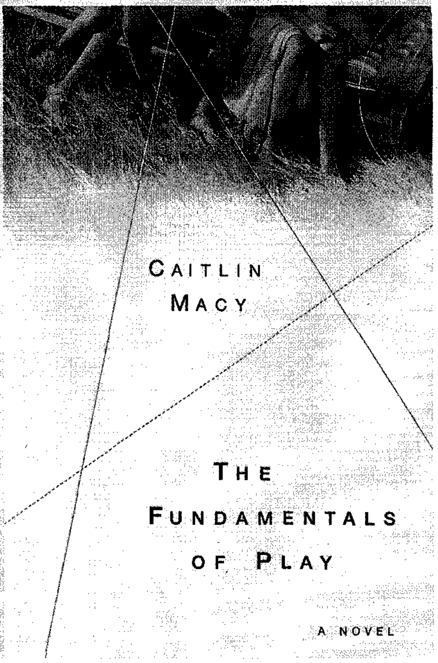
On Hostile Ground (6/11; 8 to 10 P.M.; TBS) asks us not only whether geologist John Corbett can save the French Quarter of New Orleans from disappearing into a giant sinkhole in the middle of Mardi Gras—something about underground fires having burned up a saving layer of peat—but also whether he will ever marry Jessica Steen, the city official in charge of public works who can't quite bring herself to believe his alarmist noises. The riot police are scarier than the carnival masks, the helicopters crazier than the floats, and Corbett must be wondering what happened to writers like John Falsey and Joshua Brand, who gave him such terrific things to say on all those episodes of *Northern Exposure.*

The Children of Chabannes (6/11; 7:30 to 9 P.M.; HBO) tells the story of how, during the Second World War, a village in unoccupied France saved 400 Jewish children from deportation to the death camps by stashing them in a chateau, calling that chateau a school, and surrounding the children with teachers who took the notion of trusteeship seriously. Since everybody in the chateau kept a wartime "journal" of essays, drawings, and photographs, there is a rich archive to supplement the modern-day cameras of documentarian Lisa Gossels, whose father, Peter, and uncle, Werner, were among the children saved and who accompany her back into a surprisingly heroic past.

In Print
Going to Pot

It isn't hard to peg Caitlin Macy as a *Gatsby* fan. Her first novel, *The Fundamentals of Play,* looks at the world of young men with old money through the eyes of George, an enraptured but judgmental marginal member of their clique. Despite his insights into the superficiality of their "fun" (the set's favorite word), George can't quite get enough of Chat, the consummate Wasp i-banker, or Kate, his bland blonde girlfriend, who might as well have a laugh that sounds like money. Macy grew up in Groton, Massachusetts in a family not unlike her narrator's, one with a good name but no more money. "My imagination was captured by the cool, iconoclastic burnout guys that boarding schools are filled with. They often seem to sail and smoke a bit too much pot," she says. "I was caught in their mystique—if I'd grown up in the West it might have been cowboys instead—the sort of classic guy-you-can't-really-get-to-know. In this case it was because they were hidden beneath a cloud of smoke in their dorm rooms." Macy found it easier to approach this species from the point of view of a fellow dude. "I had made the first-time writer's traditional attempt at writing an autobiographical novel, but I decided to use a male voice because it gave me an automatic distancing." And because it's the voice in so much of what she had read. "The books that have informed my writing have had these alienated male characters; most obviously Fitzgerald, but also Waugh and Maugham. One reason they work better is that a woman who seems so isolated is harder to pull off. When I was writing from a woman's perspective I kept thinking, 'Why doesn't she just call up her friends?' " Macy reads at the Corner Bookstore, 1313 Madison Avenue, at 93rd Street, on June 12 at 7 P.M.

ARIEL LEVY



Lectures and Panels

"Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone"—6/6 at 5:30 P.M.: The best-selling authors of *Used and Rare* and *Slightly Chipped* will discuss book collecting in anticipation of the Library's Book Sale, which runs from 6/7 through 6/9. The General Society Library, 20 W. 44th St. (212-921-1767); $5.

"New Alliances: International Security and Women Waging Peace"—6/8 at 5 P.M.: Featuring Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, with remarks by Richard Holbrooke, General Wesley Clark, Swanee Hunt, and a roundtable discussion with women leaders from seven regions of violent conflict. 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $20.

Ernesto Zedillo—6/8 at 7:30 P.M.: The president of Mexico discusses politics in his nation and abroad. The Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 50th St. (212-249-8950, ext. 372); $125–$250.

A Conversation With Louise Lasser—6/8 at 6 P.M.: To kick off the *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman: Marathon, Marathon* series at the museum, the actress will discuss her experiences playing the title role in Norman Lear's offbeat parody from the seventies and take questions from the audience, at the Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (212-621-6600); $10.

"Art of the Royal Tombs of Ur: An Interpretation"—6/9 at 6:30 P.M.: A discussion of the library's exhibit by Donald P. Hansen, Stephen Chan professor of Ancient Middle Eastern Archaeology at the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University. The Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008); $10, reservations required.

Slide Lecture on the History of Jackson Heights—6/10 at 12:15 P.M.: A slide lecture about the unique historic district of Jackson Heights, the first planned garden-and-cooperative-apartment community in America. The Community Church, 81-10 35th Avenue, Queens (212-439-8784); free.

"The Jew and the Camera: Explosion of New Jewish Film"—6/12 at 8 P.M.: Directors Alan Berliner (*Nobody's Business*); Mike DeWitt (*Delta Jews*); Judith Helfandt (*A Healthy Baby Girl*); Cynthia Medansky and Alisa Lebow (*Treyf*) discuss what makes a Jewish film. The Lighthouse International, 11 E. 59th St. (212-580-0099); $10–$15.

The Written Word

Helen Ellis, Suzan Sherman, and Andrew Hubner—6/9 at 8 P.M.: Reading from *Eating the Cheshire Cat*, new untitled work, and *American by Blood*, respectively. The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (212-592-4648); free, jacket required.

A Tribute to Joseph Heller—6/12 at 6:30 P.M.: Speakers Art Cooper, William Styron, and Christopher Buckley, as well as Heller's friends and family, discuss the late writer's life and work at the New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th St. (212-446-5108); free.

Les Murray—6/13 at 7 P.M.: Poetry reading by the award-winning Australian poet, upstairs at the Russian Samovar, 256 W. 52nd St. (212-206-5322); $3.

Adam Berlin—6/14 at 7:30 P.M.: Book signing and reading from the author's newest book, *Headlock*, at KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Tours

Queens Jazz Trail—6/10 at 10 A.M.: A tour half-driven, half-walked to destinations like the homes of Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Lena Horne in Addisleigh Park, concluding with a soul-food luncheon at the Blue Goose Cafe and a live jazz concert. Meet at Queens Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard, at Linden Place (718-463-7700, ext. 222); $75 adults, $65 seniors, $60 students under 21. Advance reservations required.

8th Street and St. Marks Place— 6/10 at 11:30 A.M.: A walking tour featuring the homes, hangouts, and recording studios of Edward Hopper, Andy Warhol, Loud Reed, Jimi Hendrix, and Jack Kerouac with tour leader Arthur Marks. Meet at The Gap at the northwest corner of 2nd Ave. and St. Marks Place (212-777-2173); free.

Radical East Village Tour—6/11 at 1 P.M.: A walking tour focusing on the history of Union Square, its gentrification, Sidney Hillman, and the first Labor Day Parade. Meet at the Saint Mark's in the Bowery Church at Second Ave. and 10th St. (718-492-0069); $10.

The Washington Square Neighborhood Walking Tour—6/11 at 2 P.M.: A walk through part of the Greenwich Village Historic District, stopping at ten local and national landmarks such as MacDougal Alley and the original Whitney Museum, The Church of the Ascension, and General Winfield Scott's townhouse, with discussion of Eugene O'Neill, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, and other historical figures. Meet at the Washington Square Arch at Fifth Ave. in Washington Square Park (212-979-2388); $10.

Benefits

2000 Unforgettable Circus Gala—6/7 at 6:30 P.M.: A black-tie gala featuring cocktails, dinner, an awards presentation, and the Big Apple Circus to GO, with proceeds to benefit the Alzheimer's Association–NYC Chapter. The American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St. (212-665-9177); $500-$2,500.

Youth Renewal Fund Retro Bash—6/7 at 7 P.M.: A spring gala celebration featuring cocktails, dinner, dancing, and a live auction hosted by Eric Widing of Christie's to benefit the Youth Renewal Fund, a provider of educational opportunities for disadvantaged Israeli youth. Exit, 610 W. 56th St. (212-207-3195); $150 for dancing, dessert, and drinks; $300 for cocktails, dinner, and auction; $1,000–$10,000 for ten-person table.

"Night of Zero Tolerance"—6/8 at 8:30 P.M.: Dinner and drinks with the likes of Calvin Klein, Stephen Baldwin and Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes, to benefit Sanctuary for Families, a nonprofit that works to end domestic violence and support its victims. The Metropolitan pavillion, 125 W. 18th St. (212-349-6006); $100–$500.

Friends for the Cure Benefit—6/8 at 7 P.M.: Banana Republic, *Vanity Fair* magazine, and Friends for the Cure host an evening of cocktails, hors d'ouvre, and shopping to benefit lymphoma research. Banana Republic, 1136 Madison Ave. (212-213-9595); advance tickets are $35, no tickets at door.

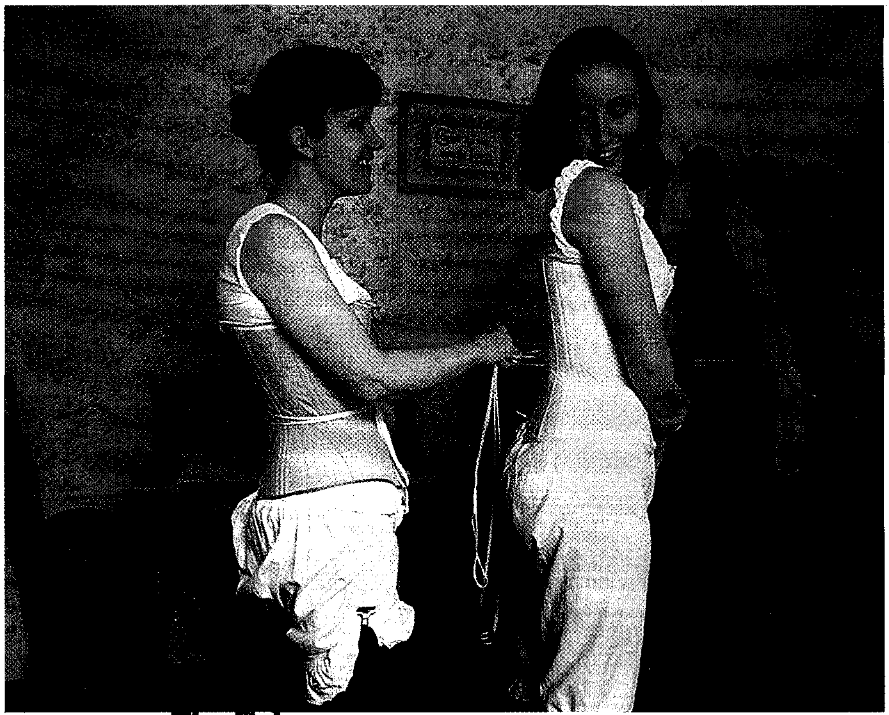
The New Group Benefit Gala—6/12 at 6:30 P.M.: An evening of cocktails, dinner, and entertainment in honor of author Dominick Dunne, with influential members of the film, theater, media, and financial communities in attendance to benefit the New Group, an award-winning nonprofit theater company. Tribeca Rooftop, 2 Desbrosses St. (212-643-6878); $300–$500.

GAME WEEK

HOME ○ AWAY ▨

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
YANKEES	MON MSG 7:05 P.M.	MON MSG 7:05 P.M.	MON MSG 7:05 P.M.		▨ NYM FSNY 7:05 P.M.	▨ NYM FOX 1:05 P.M.	▨ NYM ESPN 8:05 P.M.
METS	▨ BAL FSNY 7:10 P.M.	▨ BAL FSNY 7:10 P.M.	▨ BAL FSNY 7:10 P.M.		NYY FSNY 7:05 P.M.	NYY FOX 1:05 P.M.	NYY ESPN 8:05 P.M.
LIBERTY			DET NO TV 7:30 P.M.		▨ SAC LIFETIME 7 P.M.	IND MSG 8 P.M.	
METROSTARS					▨ TAM MSG 7:30 P.M.		
STANLEY CUP FINALS	NJ@DAL ABC 8 P.M.			▨ DAL@NJ ABC 8 P.M. (IF NEC.)		NJ@DAL ABC 8 P.M. (IF NEC.)	
	6/5	6/6	6/7	6/8	6/9	6/10	6/11

- ***At press time, the Knicks' playoff future had not been determined.***

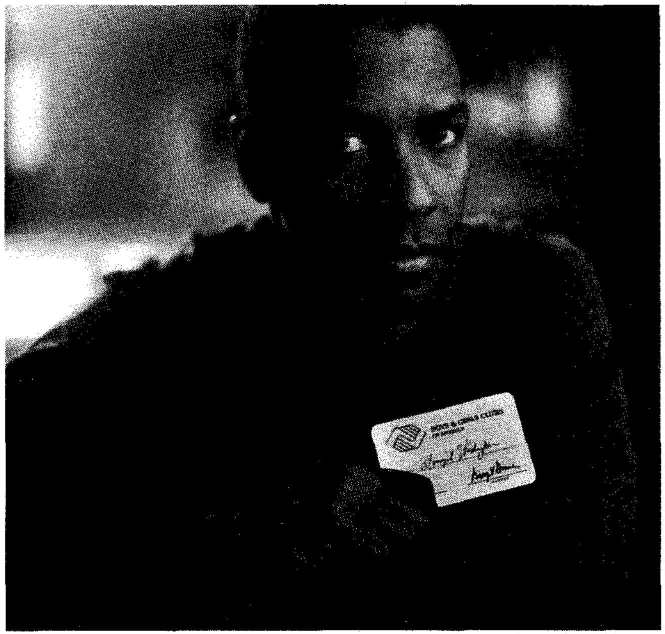


The Tube

This Old, Old House

For three months, the Bowler family got to party like it's 1899. 'The 1900 House' (June 12, 19, and 26, and July 3; 9 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13), for which they actually volunteered to spend three months living a century in the past, features chamber pots, gas lamps, and period clothes and food delivered to an antique kitchen. This, of course, required a few sacrifices: the four children listened to stories without channels to switch or Web sites to surf, the mother became a hard-working homebody drudge, and the father shaved with a cutthroat razor. It all went down in a specially renovated nineteenth-century house in Greenwich, southeast London, for the greater glory of a British TV miniseries, after which we will all be grateful for the small favors of modernity.

Photograph by Chris Ridley.



Denzel Washington

Put this card in the hands of a child and there'll be no room for a gun. A needle. Or a knife.

It's only a piece of paper, but that little membership card has helped keep millions of kids off drugs, out of gangs and in school. To learn how you can help the Boys & Girls Clubs, call: **1-800-854-Club.**

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

The Positive Place For Kids

Happening **Art fans will walk among us on June 13 from 6 to 9 P.M. at the twenty-second annual Museum Mile Festival when the Met, the National Academy of Design, the Guggenheim (pictured), and six other museums will thrust open their gates, throw aside their admission charges, and set up booths on the street. Call 212-606-2296 for information.**

Events

22nd Annual Museum Mile Festival—6/13, 6–9 P.M.: Featuring free admission to nine of New York City's finest cultural institutions, as well as outdoor art activities for children, special exhibitions, live musicians and street entertainers. The Mile, Fifth Ave. from 82nd St. to 104th St. (212-606-2296); free.

Sports

Uniforms for Uniforms Dinner/Auction—6/8, at 6 P.M. The Yankees' Orlando "El Duque" Hernandez and the Mets' Mike Hampton will be honored at this benefit for Harlem RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities) at Mickey Mantle's Restaurant, 42 Central Park South. Includes dinner and cocktails as well as two auctions of autographed memorabilia. Individual tickets, $250; several group packages, starting at $2,500. Contact Harlem RBI at 212-722-1608 for more information.

Mets at Yankees—6/9 at 7:05 P.M. (FSNY), 6/10 at 1:05 P.M. (Fox), and 6/11 at 8:05 P.M. (ESPN): A subway series without the capital letters, and three reasons not to complain about interleague play.

New York Mini-Marathon—6/10 at 9 A.M.: The twenty-ninth installment of this women-only 10K, with many of the world's elite runners competing for a total purse of more than $30,000. Benefits the New York Road Runners Foundation. Race starts on Central Park West at 61st St., finishing at W. 67th St. Numbers and T-shirts may be picked up at the NYRRC, 9 E. 89th St., 6/8–6/9 from noon to 7 P.M., or on race day from 6:45 to 8 A.M. near the finish across from Tavern on the Green. Nonmembers $17; no race-day registration. Call 212-860-4455 or visit www.nyrrc.org for more information.

Photograph by John Aquino.

kids

Scooby Doo...Reel Life

Children's Events

Hip-hop History—The first installment of a musical trilogy on the evolution of hip-hop has come to the Apollo Theater. ***ECHO PARK: THE HIP HOP MUSICAL*** depicts the early years of rap through a story of a boy in the projects searching for affirmation. Through 7/2. Tickets are $25–$35 at the box office or available through Ticketmaster. At 253 W. 125th St. (212-749-5838).

Scooby Doo—A comedy spin-off of the seventies TV cartoon mystery, this spoof brings the old gang back together for a session of ghost-hunting in the highlands of Scotland. ***SCOOBY DOOBY DOO & THE CURSE OF THE MACDOUGALS*** opens 6/9, with performances on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through 6/25. Tickets are $5, $4 for those 18 and younger. At Downtown Art, 64 E. 4th St. (212-505-0835).

Heavy Metal—No Screaming Mimis here. This exhibit at the Neuberger Museum of Art is about the alloy. **"WELDED! SCULPTURE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY"** includes performances by steel drummers and an art workshop, 6/11 from noon to 4 P.M. Admission is $5, free to kids 2 and younger. At SUNY-Purchase, 735 Anderson Hill Rd. (914-251-6100).●

Just Like Your Mother—Getting a handle on the often strained relationship between mothers and daughters is no easy task. The 92nd Street Y has put together a four-hour workshop to teach participants how to bring about change through exercises, presentations, and frank discussions. **"MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS"** will be conducted by the mother-daughter team of Leah and Ilana Tolpin, who've been leading such popular sessions for eight years. The workshop welcomes in-laws, stepmoms, and multiple generations of families. 6/11 at 10 A.M. Admission is $60 for one, $100 for two. At 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100).●

Maggie's Coming—If your kid has caught the periodic interstitials on Nick Jr. about Maggie, the smart little girl and her playful friends, then she may be happy to find out that Betty and Michael Paraskevas, a *mother-and-son* writing team from the Hamptons, have gotten Maggie her own show. ***MAGGIE AND THE FEROCIOUS BEAST*** airs at 11:30 A.M. Each half-hour episode consists of three seven-minute stories that emphasize cooperation, sharing, and the power of friendship.

Camp Town—Several places around the city provide fun and unusual camps, and some spots are still open. The **STATEN ISLAND INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES** offers Earth Camp, a specialized nature program that focuses on the environment on Staten Island. The program is geared for kids ages 7 to 11. Another program, Camp-on-the-Go, brings kids to cultural hot spots around the city. For more information, call 718-727-1135. The **SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS** has the Arts for Kids program, open to kindergarteners through fourth-graders. Kids are given a wide variety of materials with which to explore creative artistic expression. For more information, call 212-592-2010. The **BROOKLYN CULTURAL ADVENTURE PROGRAM** weaves a camp experience through the Botanic Garden, Museum of Art, Children's Museum, Public Library, and the Prospect Park Wildlife Center. Geared to kids ages 10 to 12. For more information, call 718-623-7220.

Party On, Brooklyn—The annual **WELCOME BACK TO BROOKLYN** festival bounces back on 6/11 from noon to 6 P.M. At Grand Army Plaza.●

Chocoholic—Sunday afternoons through July, **THE SCREENING ROOM** presents *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory.* Showtime is 1 P.M. Tickets are $6 for children under 12, $9 for adults (or $6 for adults if they have brunch). Brunch is available before the show; the kids' menu includes triangle-shaped noodles and French-toast fingers. 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100).

Mighty Crafty—The Parks Department is offering a free series of traditional-American-craft workshops at the historic **DYCKMAN FARMHOUSE MUSEUM**, Saturdays through 6/24. On 6/10 at 1 P.M., children will learn old-fashioned woodcarving techniques with expert carver Arthur Kirms. Other workshops include wool-dying and learning how to use a spinning wheel. At 4881 Broadway, at 204th St. (212-304-9422).●

Konnichi Wa Brooklyn—The Japanese Hill and Pond Garden, the heart of the **BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN**, blooms again after a $3 million restoration. It includes flowering cherry trees and irises and peonies that grace the perimeter of the pond. For a photo op, check out the orange-red Torii, a wooden structure that indicates the presence of a shrine nearby. (The Japanese shrine at the garden is the Shinto God of Harvest.) Guided tours are available. On 6/18, join a Japanese-kite celebration. Admission to the garden is $3, $1.50 students and seniors, free to kids under 16. At 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-7200).

Reel to Real—Step to the Bojangles beat with Bill Robinson film excerpts including *The Little Colonel* with Shirley Temple on 6/10 at 11:30 A.M. and 2 P.M. The film-and-live-performance series includes the Little Rhythm Kings in a dance tribute to Robinson. Audience participation. Tickets are $12, $6 for kids 4–14. A program of **LINCOLN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**, at the Walter Reade Theater, 165 W. 65th St. (212-875-5370).

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Cue

Susan Avery
Kids

Ethan Brown
Nightlife

Rose-Anne Clermont
In Concert

Luisa Colon
Online

Derek de Koff
Movies

Logan Hill
Theater

John Kline
Sports

John Leonard
Television

Ariel Levy
Books
Events
Radio

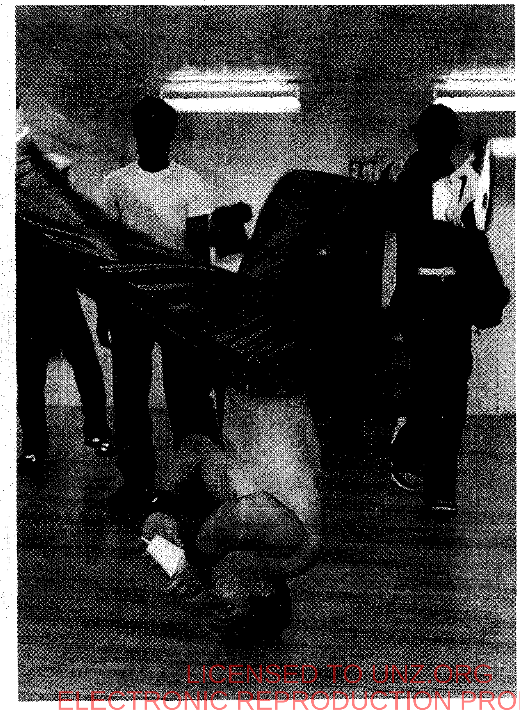
Edith Newhall
Art

Robin Raisfeld
Restaurants

Happening

A Good Rap

The advent of rap music in the late seventies found city kids gathered in parks and on street corners, armed with powerful sound systems and a strong desire for self-expression. Creating new sounds by scratching a phonograph needle on a record to deliver a sinuous effect, break-dancing, and "tagging" your crew's name on walls and subway cars were all part of the hip-hop revolution, which has now been thoroughly assimilated into popular culture. Three years ago, uptown theater producers Kelly Scott and Sean Couch decided to write a play about how it all began and to showcase the positive side of the music. The result is *Echo Park: The Hip Hop Musical,* which tells the story of a boy who escapes from the projects and a tormenting mother by D.J.-ing for his friends at park jams. According to Scott, the real Echo Park, on 176th Street at the western end of the Bronx, was ground zero for rap's roots. And she would know, having been an early b-girl (break-dancer) herself. Scott wants today's kids to know that it didn't begin commercially and initially steered clear of blatant profanity. The show, featuring break-dancer Josh Ortiz, shown right, covers the period from 1978 through 1981 and features pioneer rap artists Kurtis Blow and DJ Hollywood. Hoping to make it into a trilogy, Scott and Couch have already written part two, which covers the eighties, and plans are in the works for the third part, documenting hip-hop's ever-expanding influence in the nineties and beyond. "Hip-hop is a movement," Scott says. "With *Echo Park,* we are hoping to take it back to its pure essence." **SUSAN AVERY**



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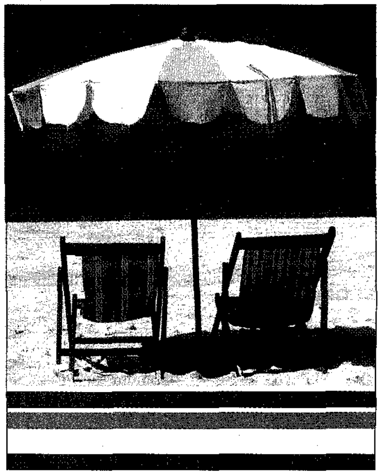

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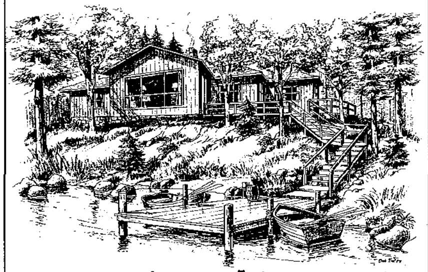

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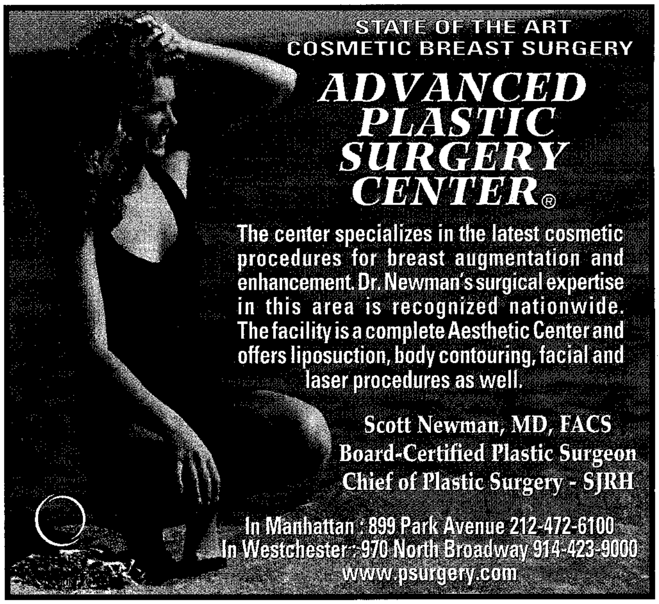

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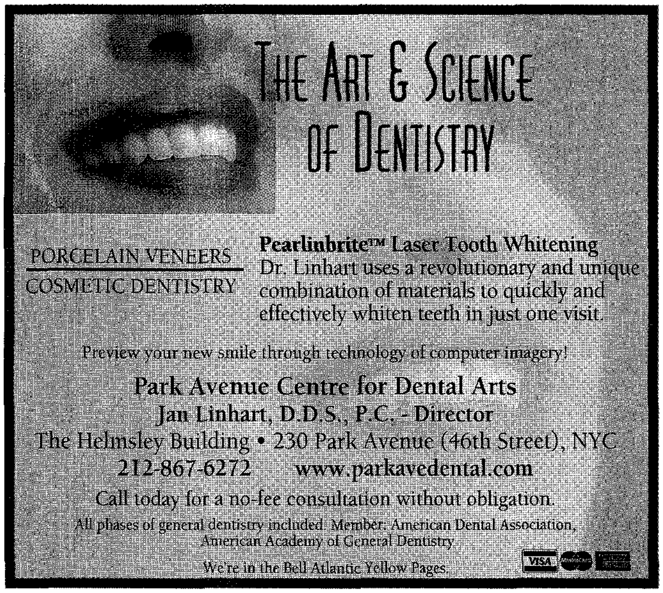
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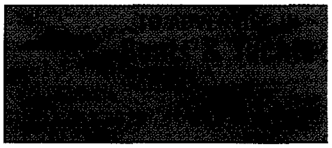

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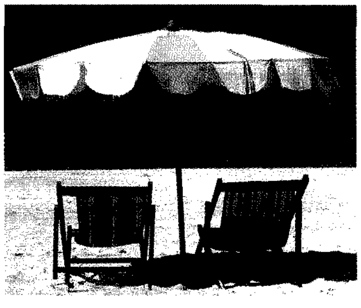

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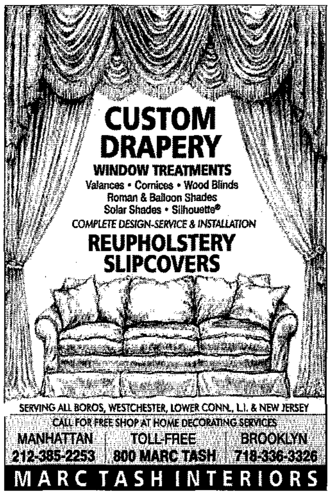

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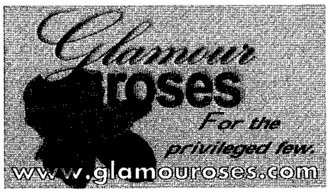
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Congratulations - You Found Me— thrive on the culture of the city and he joys of the beach. I am beautiful, spiritual, value family ties and have gained wisdom from the trials of life. Looking for a man, 58-65, who appreciates the same. Note/photo/phone. 4302 ✉

Moral Character—Is what I'm looking for. I am seeking a woman with a strong sense of self (not to be confused with elevated levels of self-centeredness). Hopefully, you are extremely honest (you don't make up a story if you are late), disarmingly frank without being off-putting, relaxed and comfortable with yourself and your body, sensual, passionate, tactile, optimistic and generally buoyant (you get out of bed happy to face the day most mornings), innately monogamous, and not terrified of the vulnerability that accompanies total commitment. Most mportantly, you are looking for a quality man to initially become your best friend and eventually your lover for life. You should be 28 to 34 (or thereabouts), highly intelligent (this is critical but does not have to be validated with some pretentious degree), principled, athletic, in shape and involved in something that you are passionate about (possibly the source of your self-esteem). I am 6'4", 220 lbs, n good shape, overeducated at rather *pompous and self-centered institutions*, somewhat irreverent/skeptical but generally happy/optimistic. I am exceptionally honest, frank and monogamous. I try to be sensitive (and, for most men, that is the right verb), and want to be there for my significant other. I formerly taught graduate school at one of the aforementioned nstitutions, now have my own investment company and am financially very secure. I am looking for a life partner to spend the fruits of my labor with. Please send a note/bio and a photo. I know the photo smacks of superficiality, but a photo is a must, because our looks are simply an essential part of chemistry. 4311 ✉

Man Alive—Handsome and honest, wry and reflective, down-to-earth Ivy in the arts. 49, 5'11", (212). Likes music, books, outdoors, good talk. Seeks bright, warm, positive, pretty and shapely (212) woman, 30s-early 50s, for the real thing. Plus laughter and hugs. Recent photo, sincere non-form letter for response. 4314 ✉

Golf/Tennis Player—Seeks country club man, 55-65, for partner. 4299 ✉ ☎

After Years Of A Great Marriage—My best friend, my husband, died. I'm lonely and I miss our relationship and the good life we shared. I'm professional, semi-retired, very witty, bright, attractive, petite. I want to share my interests in music, theater, books, travel and my ongoing love for tennis with someone who is in my orbit, in his 70s, and interested in being intellecually challenged. Westchester/CT resident preferred. Photo, please. 4296 ✉

Gay, Good-Looking, In-Shape—60, gentleman, accomplished, stylish, affluent, 5'11", 175 lbs - interested in arts, travel, gardens, country/city life style. Seeks sensitive, bright, creative younger counterpart for serious exclusive relationship. Photo essential. 4256 ✉

Jump-Start Your Heart!—With a sincere, handsome Ivy CEO, kind, 5'10", very fit, mid 40s. Seeks spirited lady under 39. Phone/photo a must. 4327✉☎

Mellow, Easygoing Female—Not hard up! Attractive and trim. Just want to meet someone who I can truly laugh with; 50-60, white male. Interested? Photo. 4307✉

Handsome, Athletic Professional—Christian male, 40s, enjoys life, laughter, walks in the park or jogs on the beach; sincere, but great sense of humor. Looking for easygoing, pretty lady, 30-38, to share the wonderful things a special relationship leading to marriage has to offer. Photo a must. 4322 ✉

Gentleman Seeks A Woman—To share the wonders of the world with! I am 45, fit and upbeat. You are slim, 30s, and seek a man who knows the way to your heart! Note and photo - or e-mail: djocpapc@hotmail.com 4333 ✉

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Run For The Roses—KY thoroughbred filly looking for her colt. Take a gamble. Green-eyed blond. 4313 ✉

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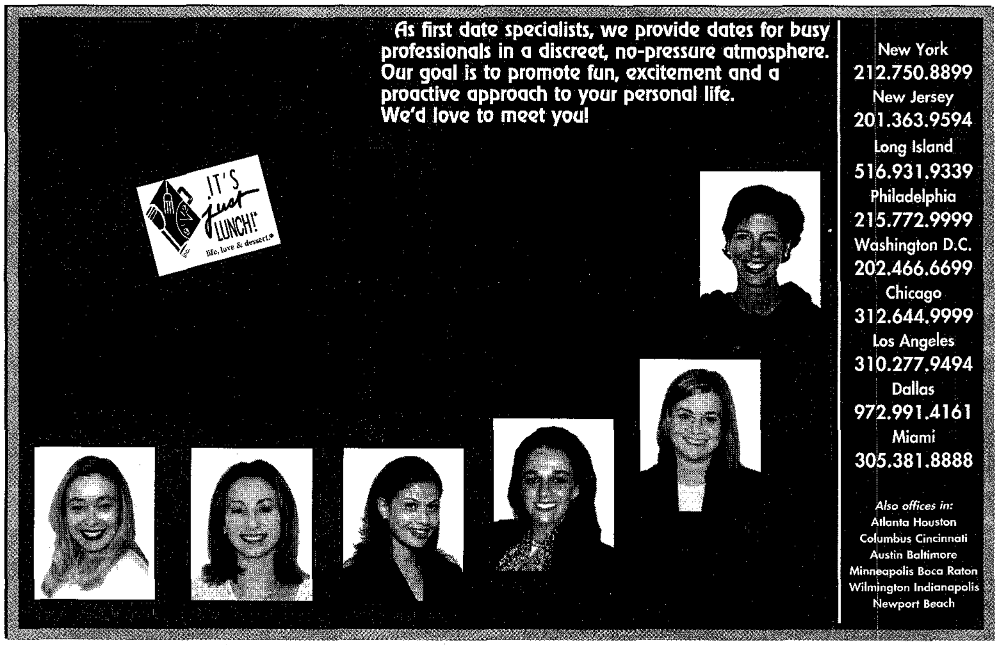

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MARY ANN MADDEN #972

NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

"Is that a vole on your hat? My wife has one on hers, but she never wears it."

"Hello. My name is Jasmine. People say I remind them of Eddie Cantor."

"You hear that the Competition changed its online address?"

Above, failed forays into conversation. One such, please, brief but destined to doom further colloquy.

Results of Competition 969, in which you were asked for a geographical pun in a familiar title, name, or phrase.

Report: Everyone entered this one, and we printed all the genius we could fit. Duplications included: You go Uruguay . . . Kissimee, Kate. We're Havana Heatwave. Yangtze Doodle. Missouri Loves Company. Katonah Hot Tin Roof. A Fish Called Rwanda. Hip Bone Schenectady Thigh Bone. Macon Whoopee. Bayonne the Blue Horizon. The Unbearable Loch Ness of Being. Singin' in Bahrain. Cat on a Hot Tenerife. Brother Kenya Spare a Dime. Begin the Beijing. Oslo Boat to China. Robin Hood, Prince of Thebes. Alabama and the Forty Thieves. My Mother Dakar. Amman for All Seasons. Ceylon O Ship of State.

First Prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

Phnom Penh Circumstance
Jessica Allen, Gaithersburg, Md.
sp. ment.: Pericles Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

Swaziland Harriet
Judy Blanchard, Novi, Mich.

Religion is the Opiate of Damascus
Byron E Fox, Manakin-Sabot, Va.

Runner-up Prizes of one-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

Objects in the Riviera May Be Closer . . .
Theodore G. Zavales, Bergenfield, N.J.

Living Latvia Loca
Coeli Carr, N.Y.C.

Ouagadougou When You Are Far Away and I Am Blue, Ouagadougou
Ron Liburdi, N.Y.C.

And Honorable Mention to:

'Tis Pity She's Lahore
Andy Staff, Truro, Mass.

The Lake George Apley
Bill Harriman, East Lyme, Conn.

La Jolla Cooking
Tom Parsonnet, Shorewood, Wisc.

What Goes up Moscow Down
F. B. Rosner, N.Y.C.

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Jack Labow, Barnegat Light, N.J.

Lord of Gdansk
John J Conti, Norfolk, Mass.

Des Plaines, Boss.
C. Kirchick, Dover, Mass.

If They Asked Me, I Could Write Tobruk
Dan McInerney, Providence, Utah

Bonfire of the Vietnamese
Paul H. Blumenthal, Las Vegas, Nev.

Where there's Seville, There's a Way
Cookie Gray, Closter, N.J.

Avon to Be Alone
Elaine Amdur, Kingston, Pa.

Dendur Is the Night
J. Bickart, N.Y.C.

Angola Wash that Man Right Out of My Hair
Alan Porwich, North Brunswick, N.J.

This Is the Far East Primeval
Joel Mansbach, Forest Hills, N.Y.

Dallas Time I Saw Paris
Teresa Heines, Niskayuna, N.Y.

Smokey Joe's Cathay
David Sitrin, Annandale, Va.

L.A. McBeal
Adam Doyle, Blacksburg, Va.

Up, Up, And Hué
Julie Sylvester, South Windsor, Conn.

Somewhere Over Durango
Sharon Lawyer, Rye, N.Y.

With Sichuan Eggroll
Ben Kallen, Santa Monica, Calif.

Encino Royale
Steve Snider, N.Y.C.

Secret Asian Man
Brian Plante, Matthews, N.C.

Like Waterford Chocolate
Bruce Anthony, Stamford, Conn.

À La Recherche du Tomsk Perdu
Joel Sitrin, Annandale, Va.

Tie a Yalau River 'Round The Old Oak Tree
Rachel Shea, Cromwell, Conn.

Belize, Mr. Postman
Ernest Falciglia, Providence, R.I.

Hartford Arts Sake
Denise Reiss, Los Angeles, Calif.

Eton Raoul
Paula Doherty, Tiverton, R.I.

Gilligan's Ireland
Meghan Foley, Cranston, R.I.

The Theory of the Lisieux Class
Lauren Foley, Cranston, R.I.

Beirut Force
Emily Sylvester, South Windsor, Conn.

Juneau and the Paycock
Natalie Wittenbrook, San Francisco, Calif.

The Lourdes Prayer
Susan Harriman, San Francisco, Calif.

Raleigh 'Round the Flag, Boys
Linda Giordano, Florence, Ala.

Animal Caracas
Abigail Dobbs, Florence, Ala.

Marietta Little Lamb
John Paul Dobbs, Florence, Ala.

Early Tibet Early to Rise
Suzanne Jacobson, N.Y.C.

The Falklands and the Snowman
Tony Valenti, Holmdel, N.J.

Bouldergeist
Ryan Gresch, Holmdel, N.J.

Dr. Chicago
David Chasman, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Saving Private Rhine
Melinda Stein, Savannah, Ga.

Smoke Gets in Versailles
Marc Feldman, Birmingham, Ala.

Leyte Sings the Blues
Dede Persson, Mundelein, Ill.

She Sells Seychelles
Fran Manne, Mahwah, N.J.

Poor Richard's Armagnac
Lucy Oblonsky, Hockessin, Del.

Little House on Tipperary
Elisa Falciglia, Reston, Va.

Patchogue Your Troubles . . .
A. Shulman, Sarasota, Fla.

Women Are From Venice, Men Are From Mars
Judy Mostowitz, Brooklyn

La Paz That Refreshes
Don Wigal, N.Y.C.

San Juan to Watch Over Me
John Blumenthal, Rye, N.Y.

The Firenze Eddie Coyle
Louise Jackson, Somerset, Mass.

Racine With the Moon
Dinnie Martinson, Crofton, Md.

Norway to Treat a Lady
Lars Pettygrove, Charlottesville, Va.

Yumaresque
John Grady Dallas, Tex.

Those Darien Young Men . . .
Brian Smith, Stamford, Conn.

OMPETITION

Jimmy Krakow, and I Don't Care
Sheila Martinez, Margate, Fla.

Duquesne Mutiny
G. N. Pigue, Sunnyside, N.Y.

Damascus Zorro
Tom Frenkel, Sunnyside, N.Y.;
Wm. Faith, Stanton Heights, Pa.

Girls Botswana Have Fun
Debbie Rodriguez, Novi, Mich.

I Never Mediterranean I Didn't Like
David Galler, University, Miss.

. . . a Bull Indochina Shop
Mike Reiss, Los Angeles, Calif.

Canada Hot Tin Roof
Tova Weiser, West Orange, N.J.

Melts in Yarmouth, Not in Your Hand
Penelope Kent, N.Y.C.

Take My Wife . . . Belize
Bob Salias, Naples, N.Y.

One Flew Over the Cuzco Nest
Al Pine, Jersey City, N.J.

Yes, We Have No Bahamas
Carleton Carpenter, Warwick, N.Y.

Blame It on the Barcelona
J. T. Long, Penfield, N.Y.

Taipei Personality
Margaret Curry, Marietta, Ga.

The Burma of Alcatraz
Russell Marlow, N.Y.C.

The Madras of King George
Marilyn Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

Austin Space
Michele Shpeter, Brooklyn
sp. ment.: Jeannine Cruz, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Detroit? You can't handle Detroit.
Selma Ellis, Glenview, Ill.

Angola Pond
Norman Charles, N.Y.C.

Yazoo, Joy of Man's Desiring
Roy Underwood, Livingston, Ala.

Vienna Creator Spiritus
Casey Luther, Buffalo, N.Y.

I Came, I Saw, I Concord
Ruth Gold, Flemington, N.J.

The Kabul Guy
Catherine Lume, Maspeth, N.Y.

Have You Aberdeen Lonely
Raymond Kauders, Montesano, Wash.

Bora Bora Hallelujah
Bill McDevitt, Akron, Ohio

Medina With André
Josephine Lume, Maspeth, N.Y.

Suffern Succotash
Ed Pavon, Suffern, N.Y.

The Farm Orinda Dell
Margaux McMillan, Orinda, Calif.

Rules: Postcards, please, typed if possible. **ONE ENTRY ONLY** to Competition Number 972, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. E-mail to 104700.2563@compuserve.com, **WITH STREET ADDRESS.** Entries must be received by June 16. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York*. Results and winners' names will appear in the July 17 issue.

●

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

■	D	■	P	■	J	■	■	■	N	■	M	■	M	■
B	R	E	A	K	I	N	■	B	I	G	O	T	E	D
■	O	■	N	■	L	■	G	■	G	■	S	■	A	■
S	P	R	O	U	T	■	R	E	H	E	A	R	S	E
■	O	■	R	■	E	■	A	■	T	■	I	■	L	■
P	U	P	A	■	D	I	S	C	J	O	C	K	E	Y
■	T	■	M	■	■	■	S	■	A	■	■	■	S	■
■	■	C	A	R	D	S	H	A	R	P	E	R	■	■
■	G	■	■	■	R	■	O	■	■	■	N	■	S	■
L	O	C	K	K	E	E	P	E	R	■	T	A	T	E
■	R	■	I	■	S	■	P	■	A	■	R	■	R	■
D	I	S	T	A	S	T	E	■	G	R	A	T	E	R
■	L	■	T	■	A	■	R	■	G	■	N	■	A	■
A	L	L	E	R	G	Y	■	T	E	A	C	A	K	E
■	A	■	N	■	E	■	■	■	D	■	E	■	S	■

P	A	S	H	A	■	■	C	A	I	N	■	O	F	A	■	■	P	E	P	E
A	C	T	O	R	S	■	A	S	S	A	I	L	E	D	■	V	I	L	L	A
T	H	E	S	T	A	R	S	P	A	N	G	L	E	D	B	E	N	H	U	R
H	Y	P	E	■	L	O	T	S	■	■	L	A	D	■	A	N	A	I	S	■
■	■	■	■	C	A	L	L	■	I	T	O	■	B	E	S	O	T	■	■	■
■	■	H	E	A	D	L	E	S	S	H	O	R	A	C	E	M	A	N	N	■
S	H	A	R	P	S	■	■	P	L	O	■	E	G	O	S	■	■	O	A	K
E	A	D	I	E	■	A	L	I	A	S	E	S	■	L	T	S	■	I	D	I
C	H	I	C	K	E	N	A	N	N	E	R	I	C	E	■	O	A	S	I	S
T	A	T	■	■	M	I	R	E	D	■	E	N	O	■	M	I	L	E	R	S
■	■	■	C	A	I	N	E	■	■	■	■	■	U	D	A	L	L	■	■	■
R	E	V	O	L	T	■	D	A	D	■	B	A	L	E	R	■	■	R	D	A
A	M	A	N	A	■	G	O	D	S	T	E	V	E	M	C	Q	U	E	E	N
F	I	G	■	N	O	R	■	D	O	W	R	I	E	S	■	U	R	B	A	N
T	R	U	■	■	R	A	B	I	■	I	A	S	■	■	L	A	G	U	N	A
■	S	E	V	E	N	T	Y	S	I	X	T	O	M	J	O	N	E	S	■	■
■	■	■	A	V	I	E	W	■	S	T	E	■	O	U	S	T	■	■	■	■
■	S	P	R	I	T	■	A	T	L	■	■	A	R	M	S	■	A	S	I	A
W	H	E	N	T	H	E	Y	A	A	R	O	N	S	P	E	L	L	I	N	G
H	O	S	E	A	■	R	O	O	M	E	T	T	E	■	S	E	A	N	C	E
O	D	O	R	■	■	I	F	S	■	F	O	I	L	■	■	T	R	E	A	D

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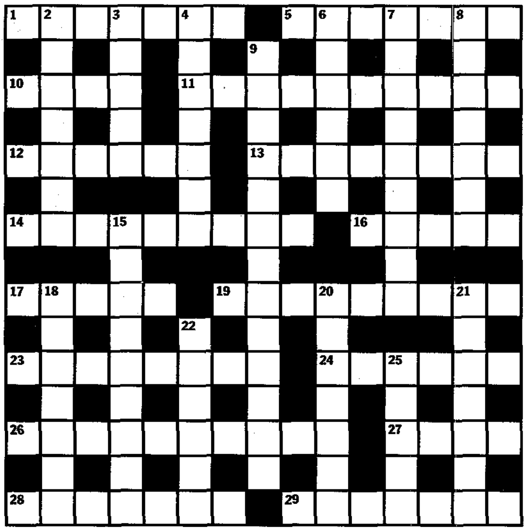
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 A mew of disapproval? (7)
5 Beg for Satanic Verses etc.? (7)
10 See 16.
11 Much rain told us curb would be needed. (10)
12,14 Part of Stalin—which, with Castro's support, follows usual worm's rendering. (6,9)
13 Dickensian police-station—the French get close. (8)
14 See 12.
16,10,27 Old Mr. Spindleshanks in "The Flight of the Cranes"? (5-4-4)
17 See 22.
19 Portable weaponry, as opposed to 10 27? (5,4)
23 Spotted return of old lawyer, Liberal, being quick about it. (8)
24 Ordered to receive information from part of engine. (3,3)
26 Fussy item. (10)
27 See 16.
28 Fifty krone's demanded for submarine aid. (7)
29 Nobody wants to look at Eeyore's building. (7)



DOWN

2 One maybe called in Spanish the see-you-later fruit. (7)
3 Very sad, without model going up in smoke. (5)
4 Left turn threw, in the first place, Herrick's girl. (7)
6 Doctor in Latin, I say to myself. (6
7 Amorous don keeps wayward Johnson in US city and European capital. (9)
8 Got up, and whence, where Peace may be found. (3,4)
9 Conventionally so placed. (4,3,6)
15 Lawyer joins chemical company i Sun Hill. (9)
18 Say why axle-pin broke. (7)
20 Statuesque bit of cheek? (7)
21 Runner first in stable feature. (7)
22,17 Aid to propagating blackbird in fictional village. (11)
25 Small internal adjustment makes adhesives red. (5)

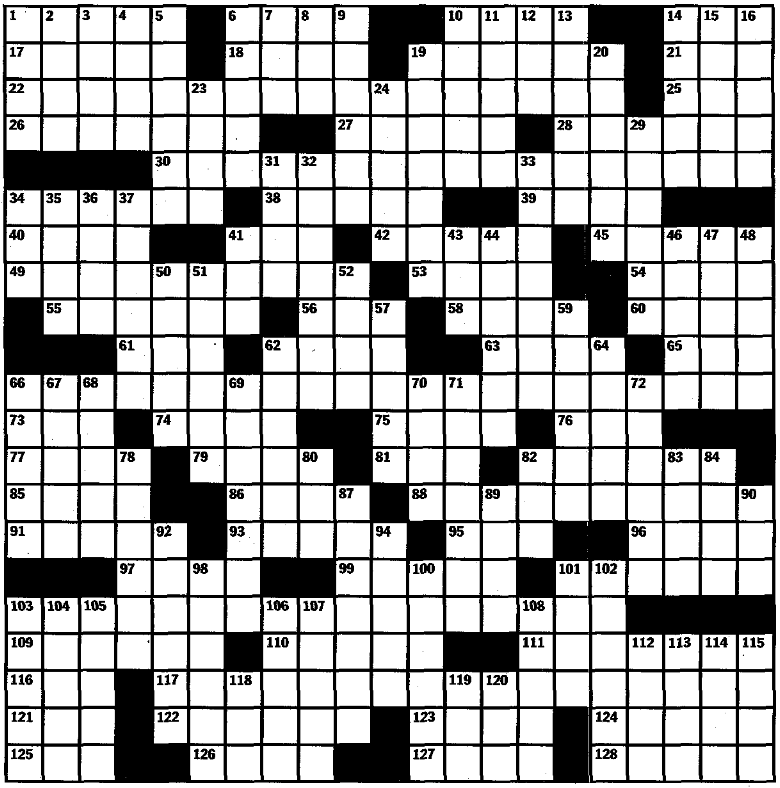
'Come to the Wedding': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

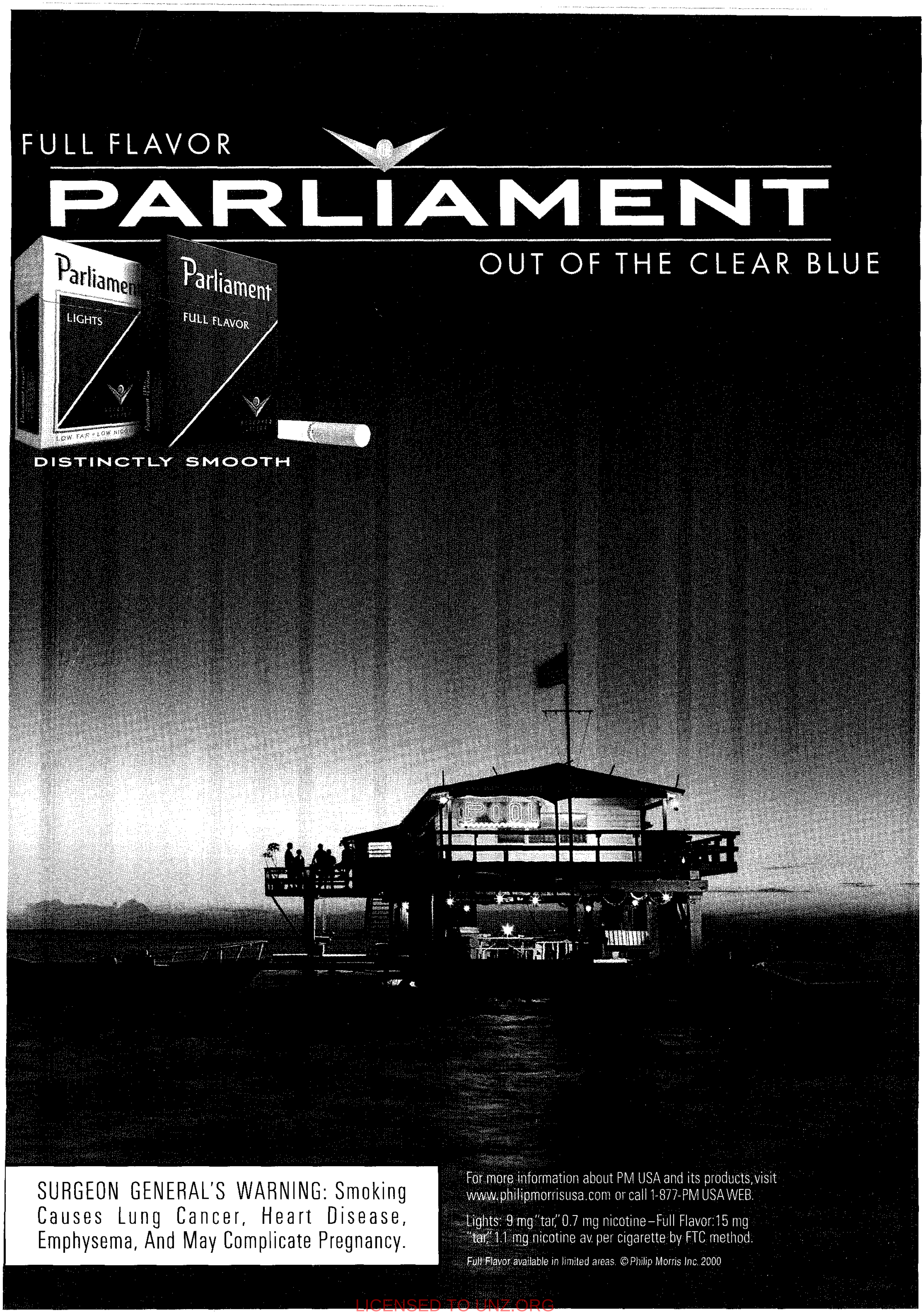
1 Red-carpet events
6 Stream sediment
10 Capone blemish
14 Toastmasters, for short
17 Make amends
18 Butter sub
19 Ran rampant
21 Knack
22 Sir Walter Scott tale, with "The"
25 "Turn right, Dobbin!"
26 "Ol' Blue Eyes"
27 Student receiving private coaching
28 Far East temple
30 1951 Bing Crosby movie
34 Type of evangelical music
38 Garbage destinations
39 Cherbourg cherub
40 "Do I dare to —— peach?": Eliot
41 Rowboat implement
42 Uncomplaining sufferer
45 Navy and Scotland
49 Political film from a Gore Vidal play
53 Swim's alternative
54 Arrange by kind
55 Über dots
56 —— Mahal
58 Colleen
60 One of Isaac's twins
61 P.O. abbr.
62 Personnel list
63 —— Alto, California
65 Sermon topic
66 Julie Harris starring vehicle
73 Internet-access co.
74 Oblique line: abbr.
75 Autostrada auto
76 Author LeShan
77 Stubborn beast: Sp.
79 Lou Grant's paper, familiarly
81 Opposite of fore
82 Retaliate an injury
85 Prudishly proper
86 Dunce
88 Eliza Doolittle, originally
91 Item of value
93 "Down Under" G.I.
95 —— long (soon)
96 Frozen-waffle brand
97 Word for Uncle Remus's rabbit
99 Café cup
101 John Wayne's real first name
103 Start of a lament from a frequent also-ran
109 Most miffed
110 Painter's tripod
111 Differ from the norm
116 Also
117 James M. Barrie novel
121 Choose
122 Tranquil
123 S.A.T., e.g.
124 Gives as reference
125 Nursery-rhyme "pocketful"
126 St. Louis gridders
127 Actress Russo
128 Chopin form

DOWN

1 Shoots the breeze
2 Italian town in a Longfellow poem
3 Pork cut
4 Time —— half
5 Be boiling mad
6 Up to now
7 Laid up
8 Grazing ground
9 Drum for Hiawatha
10 Horse fathers
11 Sky streaker
12 From —— Z
13 End a temporary closing
14 Myopic cartoon character
15 Belief
16 Radiator output
19 Does a lab verification
20 Tiresomely lengthy
23 Pitcher Hershiser
24 Parotitis (childhood ailment)
29 Garage lubricant
31 Cheese burg
32 Museum manager
33 Metal-cutting tool
34 Obtain
35 "Hawaii Five-O" local
36 Stop the flow of
37 Baby-cereal trademark
41 Hall-of-Fame Giant
43 OPEC abundance
44 Acting bad-tempered
46 Martini's partner, on a vermouth label
47 Empty the liquid from
48 Bitten by a bee
50 Relieved tension
51 Peak
52 U.S.-Eur. pact
57 Tel Aviv's contiguous city
59 Magician's hiding place
62 Territory
64 More peculiar
66 Bay city of Florida
67 Clock-hand indication
68 Immigration island
69 Hillary's predecessor
70 Spat
71 Bareheaded
72 Jeopardy
78 One-celled animals
80 Dickens's pen name
82 Bedazzle
83 Leslie Caron title role
84 Therefore
87 Fine cotton fabric
89 City near Utah Lake
90 Nol of Cambodia
92 Lovers' assignations
94 West Pointer
98 Rolle or Williams
100 Retailer
101 Demeanor
102 Help from Ann Landers
103 Defunct New York hotel
104 Like a kook
105 Practiced penmanship
106 Brazilian port
107 April expectations
108 —— a dozen
112 "Whose Life —— Anyway?"
113 Aleutian outpost
114 Began golfing, with "off"
115 Gaelic dialect
118 Stat. for 23-Down
119 Devonshire river
120 Top of a centaur



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 107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